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24



Around CNMI



Glushko's Academy of Performing Arts students and Saratov Academic Opera and Ballet Theater artists take a bow after the staging of the Sleeping Beauty Friday night at the Multi-Purpose Center.

‘Sleeping Beauty’ captivates Saipan

Text and Photos By EDITH G. ALEJANDRO
REPORTER

Six professional ballet artists from the Saratov Academic Opera and Ballet Theater in Russia joined students and teachers from Saipan's Glushko's Academy of Performing Arts in the local staging of the fairy tale "Sleeping Beauty" in two solid hours of intense performances, which the audience greeted with loud applause.

The three-night ballet performance opened Friday night at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe.

At least 40 students of Glushko's Academy are part of the three-night staging of the Short Excerpt of Sleeping Beauty Ballet Performance and the Concert of Russian Ballet Masters.

The show, which will run until tonight, Dec. 7, 2003, at the multi-purpose center, relived the fairy tale that has—and it still does—captured millions of hearts throughout the world.

The Sleeping Beauty ballet engagement is the second pre-Christmas offering of the Glushko's Academy of Performing Arts.

In December 2002, the academy produced the first-ever professional ballet production of "The Nutcracker" and a "Concert of Russian Ballet Masters" on Saipan.

The first part of the Sleeping Beauty show gathered the young ballerinas from Glushko's together with the professional performers, while the second part featured the Saratov State Opera Ballet Theater performers in the Concert of the Russian Ballet Masters.

Glushko's Academy of Performing Arts was established in July 2002. It focuses in providing original and technique ballet instructions to students from ages three to up.



The ballet masters, who played Princess Aurora and Prince Desire, danced after the prince kissed Sleeping Beauty and woke her up from a slumber.



Adult ballerinas from the Glushko's Academy perform while young ballerinas wait for their turn.



Two young ballerinas bow after their well-applauded performances.



At least 40 young ballerinas join in the staging of the Sleeping Beauty ballet at the Multi-Purpose Center. The show will run up until tonight at 7.

urban outlet
+orange

Matson, Sablan asked to stay in PSS for additional 60 days

By LIBERTY DONES
REPORTER

Two retiring Public School System program coordinators are asked to stay in the system for another 60 days or up to the end of February 2004.

The Board of Education, upon the request of PSS Commissioner Rita H. Inos, approved a 60-day waiver for federal program officer William P. Matson and E-rate program coordinator Nick Sablan.



Inos

The two are scheduled to retire by end of this month.

Inos, in her remarks before the board, said that Matson and Sablan's departure from PSS at this time would be disadvantageous for the system considering that they occupy "hard-to-fill positions."

She said Sablan's stay is crucial for the continued funding of E-rate program. "To leave the program now is not in the best interest of PSS."

PSS, based on the E-rate grant it received in 1999 from Federal Communication Commission's Universal Service Program, gets up to 80 percent subsidy in communication costs, including internet and telephone bills for schools and libraries.



Matson

Matson, who heads the PSS federal program office for several years now, according to Inos, is very much needed by the system in its continuing

discussions with the U.S. Department of Education on several items, including Title 6, which involves sharing of federal funds with private schools.

Likewise, she said there are pending grant applications that require Matson's supervision.

"He is very instrumental in obtaining various federal grants for PSS...there will be closing of grants so we want to make sure that everything will be smooth," she said.

The board said the 60-day extension is allowed under the CNMI Constitution, but anything more than that would harm the retirees' claims.

"Unlike teachers who can get up to two years of extension, they (Matson and Sablan) would lose their retirement benefits if they stay longer," said BOE chairman Herman T. Guerrero.

Aside from Matson and Sablan, education associate commissioner for administration Louise Concepcion is also retiring on December 27.



RESPONSIBLE SERVING

Department of Public Safety officer Anthony Macaranas talks about the dangers of drunk and drugged driving before some members of the Northern Marianas Bartenders Association during a training program sponsored by the DPS and other agencies in efforts to educate the islands' bartenders on responsible serving of alcoholic beverages.

EDITH G. ALEJANDRO

Montgomery's sentencing reset—again

For the fourth time, the U.S. District Court postponed the scheduled sentencing of controversial trader Bert Douglas Montgomery for his convictions on wire fraud and money laundering charges.

The federal court reset Friday's supposed sentencing to December 30, its staff said Thursday.

Originally, Chief Judge Alex R. Munson had set Montgomery's sentencing on September 23. This was moved to November 18, and then to November 25.

The previous postponements

were based on stipulation between the prosecution and Montgomery. Court staff did not specify if the same reason applies to the new postponement.

A federal jury found Montgomery guilty of three counts each of wire fraud and money laundering charges, and a count each of conspiracy to commit wire fraud and money laundering conspiracy. After a full-blown jury trial, the jury acquitted him only on one wire fraud count.

Montgomery has been jailed at the Division of Corrections in

Susupe, after the court revoked his temporary release sometime last July. Prior to this, records showed that Montgomery was in home detention when he watched a movie at the Hollywood Theaters last June 20—thus, violating release conditions.

The court first cancelled Montgomery's pretrial release last May 2, after he was spotted at the Tinian Dynasty Hotel & Casino when he was restricted on the island of Saipan. The court released him later but not without electronic monitoring. *(John Ravelo)*

NMC offers Mandarin, sign language courses

Northern Marianas College will be offering courses in the Second Language Certificate program, conversational Mandarin Chinese course and Creative Writing course in Spring 2004.

Second Language Certificate program

■ LN 220 Introduction to Linguistics on Mondays and Wednesdays from 5pm to 6:25pm

■ LN 240 TFL/TSL Theory and Methodology on Saturdays from 1pm to 4pm.

Conversational Mandarin Chinese course

■ CN 100 on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 7pm to 8:25pm.

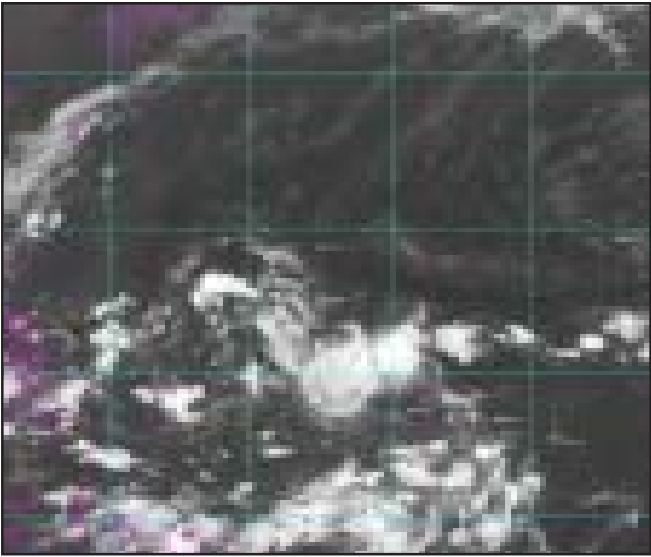
Creative Writing course

■ EN 201 on Mondays and Wednesdays from 6:30pm to 7:55pm.

cars

mcdo

WEATHER FORECAST



PICTURE TIME: 1 A.M., NOVEMBER 8, 2003
Western North Pacific between Equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A weak monsoon trough extends eastward from 6n130e to 7n155e to 13n165e. North of the trough...speed convergence in the trade wind easterly flow is generating scattered showers and thunderstorms north of Palau between 10n and 15n from 130e to 150e. Low-level convergence in the westerly flow south of the trough is producing scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms near Chuuk within 60 miles of 7n153e...and north of Kosrae within 50 miles of a line from 7n160e to 10n166e.



SAIPAN AND TINIAN
Scattered showers & a chance of thunderstorms.
Winds: East at 20 mph.



GUAM AND ROTA
Scattered showers & a chance of thunderstorms.
Winds: East at 20 mph.



PALAU
Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: Variable at less than 10 kt.



POHNPEI
Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: Variable at less than 10 kt.



YAP AND ULITHI
Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: Variable at less than 5 kt.






















KOSRAE
Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: Variable at less than 10 kt.



CHUUK
Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: Variable at less than 10 kt.



MAJURO
Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: Variable at less than 10 kt.

CITY	FORECAST	HIGH	LOW
 Auckland	Partly Cloudy	61F (16C)	49F (9C)
 Beijing	Partly Cloudy	38F (3C)	24F (-4C)
 Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	85F (29C)	72F (22C)
 Honolulu	Sunny	87F (31C)	74F (23C)
 London, England	Cloudy	46F (8C)	39F (4C)
 Los Angeles	Cloudy	67F (19C)	54F (12C)
 Manila	Cloudy	87F (31C)	70F (21C)
 Melbourne	Sunny	72F (22C)	50F (10C)
 Miami	Partly Cloudy	86F (30C)	77F (25C)
 New York, NY	Sunny	46F (8C)	34F (1C)
 Osaka	Partly Cloudy	65F (18C)	52F (11C)
 Paris	Partly Cloudy	41F (5C)	32F (0C)
 Pusan	Sunny	74F (23C)	58F (14C)
 Rome	Thunder	61F (16C)	51F (11C)
 Salem, Oregon	Cloudy	54F (12C)	40F (4C)
 San Francisco	Rain	60F (16C)	52F (11C)
 Seoul	Rain	63F (17C)	39F (4C)
 Tokyo	Partly Cloudy	66F (19C)	58F (14C)
 Washington, DC	Sunny	50F (10C)	34F (1C)

PUBLIC NOTICE

December 12th, 13th, 14th, 2003

Acute Violations of CNMI Drinking Water Regulations

Drinking Water Violation: Fecal Coliform-*E. Coli*
Areas Between North San Vicente and Papago

(SAIPAN, December 11th, 2003)—Public Water Systems are operated by the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation. The public utility is in violation of the CNMI Drinking Water Regulations in the northern most point of San Vicente, exiting to Papago. All residents in the water regions / village(s) listed are immediately advised of an acute water violation that indicates the presence of the bacteria: *E. Coli*, that is in the family of fecal coliforms.

The Commonwealth Utilities Corporation collects water samples according to a Monitoring Plan, approved by the CNMI Division of Environmental Quality (DEQ). Routine water samples were collected on December 9th and 10th. An independent laboratory, Quality Water, incubated and analyzed the samples. At 3:00 p.m. December 10th, the Utility was notified of possible violations and advised to repeat water collection samples from within the distribution system’s Monitoring Plan that are located in a broader scope, called, “upstream” and “downstream” sampling. Technicians can then determine the extent, scope, or size of the contamination, as noted in the chart below.

Quality Water verifies, on December 11th, that the CUC distribution system remains in violation in northern San Vicente with the presence of fecal coliforms. The utility is required to notify the public and the Division of Environmental Quality (DEQ) of the violation of the CNMI Drinking Water Regulations.

As of 5:00 pm, Friday, December 12, Quality Water advised CUC that the water tests are okay, corrective measures are taken and there is no more fecal coliforms in the water.

Health Effects

The presence of **Fecal Coliforms** or *E. coli* bacteria is a serious health concern. These bacteria are not generally harmful themselves, but their presence in drinking water is usually associated with animal or human wastes, indicating a problem either with treatment (such as power outages stopping chlorine treatment systems) or problems within the public water transmission pipelines (such as a broken pipe that allows contaminated runoff from homesteads, commercial lots, ranches, and polluted soils to enter into the system). The water may be contaminated with organisms that can cause disease. Short-term health effects may include: diarrhea, cramps, nausea, headaches, or possibly jaundice, and associated fatigue. They may pose a special health risk for infants, young children, and people with severely compromised immune systems. These symptoms, however, are not only associated with drinking water; they may also be caused by a number of other factors, other than the water. To reduce adverse health effects, the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) sets drinking water standards. Under the standards, all drinking water must be free of any *E. coli* or Fecal Coliforms.

Do You Have A Catchment Tank?

If people collect, store, keep or mix CUC water and rainwater in catchment tanks, or if you store water for several days, we strongly urge customers to first boil water before use. (Bring the water to a rapid boil for about five minutes; OR alternately, household bleach (Clorox™ or Purex™) may be added: 5 drops per gallon or 2 teaspoons per/one hundred (100) gallons of water. Mix the bleach and water and let it stand for 30 minutes before using the water. Otherwise, there are no actions or alternatives necessary.

Corrective Actions Taken

Chlorine Gas is injected into the water. The gas kills harmful bacteria and is a common treatment method. On Thursday, December 11th, 2003, the Lab crews will again collect repeat samples from the contaminated zone and the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation Water Chlorination Teams continue to inject chlorine gas at Treatment Stations. The chlorine is fed into the entire distribution systems—at all 13 Saipan water zones. Water is treated primarily at the reservoirs and tanks; and where no tanks are yet built, the wells are first grouped together for treatment prior to water distribution. CUC operates a total of 132 water wells and three springs. has 42 Treatment Stations that are monitored for compliance under the CNMI Drinking Water Regulations, enforced by the DEQ.

Testing Date(s)	Monitoring Plan Sample Site	Villages & Locations of Violation
December 9-11 th	Rita Guerrero Test Site	Between north San Vicente and Papago
December 10 th :	Anthony Guerrero Test Site	Same Family Property-north San Vicente

For more information about water operations, customers may contact CUC Water Manager Jess Castro 235-7025; or CUC Special Advisor Pamela A. Mathis at 235-7037. Questions that relate to the CNMI Drinking Water Regulations can be addressed to DEQ, at Joe Kaipat, at 664-8500.

Viewpoints

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EDITORIAL

Action for AIDS

The World Health Organization this week released details of its “3 by 5” plan—by which it means to put 3 million HIV-infected people on anti-retroviral drugs by the end of 2005. Eight thousand people a day die of AIDS. Even if the WHO accomplishes its ambitious goal, it will reach only about half the people who urgently need the drug therapies that can convert HIV from a death sentence into a manageable chronic condition. Still, the WHO program—along with the Bush administration’s commitment to spend \$15 billion over the next five years and the efforts of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria—is a critical and belated response to a disease that is ravaging sub-Saharan Africa.

The problem of AIDS in Africa is so daunting that it has long paralyzed policymakers. Africa’s health care infrastructure is meager. Drugs are expensive. AIDS patients cannot simply be cured and sent home; they have to be treated for life. The principal accomplishment of the WHO plan is providing manageable standards for delivering care to large numbers of patients in settings that have long been considered too difficult to reach. The plan jumps the high hurdles by simplifying everything: delivering a standardized package of anti-retroviral therapies, for example, and training community health care workers in dispensing them and providing related services. Drug prices are expected to come down as more doses are purchased. Infrastructure will be created. The document provides, for the first time, the outlines of a strategy for attacking a global problem on a global level.

The estimated \$5.5 billion needed to make this happen is meant to come from various sources: governments in affected countries, the Global Fund, donor nations. There is enough money in hand at least to get started. Congress is poised to appropriate \$2.4 billion, including \$550 million for the Global Fund—significantly more than Mr. Bush requested—and the Global Fund is ramping up spending as well. But over the longer term, there is still a significant gap. Despite having the second-largest economy in the world, Japan has contributed less to the Global Fund than has the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Australia has not given a cent, and the oil-rich Gulf states have collectively pledged a mere \$10 million. The world’s resource commitment must be generous, broad-based and, as long as AIDS remains incurable, ongoing. The WHO has produced a kind of road map for making care available, but a map is only useful if people are willing to follow it.

The Washington Post

ONELA WORLD HERALD
KIDEBIN

Survey says: Duh!

By JIM SOLLISCH

Washington Post

One of my great joys in life is reading a research study, preferably done at an impossibly prestigious institution, hopefully costing millions of dollars and lasting several years, to which my reaction is, “Duh.” Like the study a few years ago that found broccoli to be good for you. Or those studies that come out every other month about how exercise lowers the risk of heart disease. Well, another breakthrough just in: A Mayo Clinic study has found that the spouses of snorers may wake up as often in the night as do snorers and thus suffer from many of the same symptoms. Come on, say it with me—I know you want to: Duh.

Anyone who has slept next to a serious snorer could have saved the Mayo Clinic a lot of trouble. I have never lived with a snorer, but I once vacationed with my in-laws (now my ex-in-laws) for three days and two nights. It would have been three nights, but my father-in-law snored so loudly that we left a day early. And he was in the other room, next to my poor, long-suffering mother-in-law, who, we now know, thanks to the crack team of researchers at the Mayo Clinic, has been suffering from a condition called secondhand snoring. I thought she was just perpetually cranky.

I happily anticipate the research being done at other prestigious universities to uncover other secondhand conditions. Secondhand brain loss syndrome. A team of researchers follows people who married airheads and then compares their IQ scores after five years of marriage and after 10. The results will show that marrying someone who watches TV all day and never reads can lower your own IQ. To which those of us whose brains haven’t atrophied will respond with a resounding “Duh.”

I also predict a big study to uncover the effects of secondhand wealth. This occurs when a person of moderate means marries a person who is filthy rich. That event causes the once-poorer spouse to have more money, which can lead to negative effects on his or her other relationships. People suffering from secondhand wealth often complain that their families don’t understand the demands of country club membership or keeping good help.

While we’re on the subject of marriage, let me tell you about a new study on mating, one that replicates the results of thousands of daily conversations between women and their hairdressers. Hold on to your spouse for this one. Women are more likely to have a fling with a man described as rebellious and promiscuous than with a man described as law-abiding and monogamous. Do we need a study of 257 college women, conducted by scholars at the University of Michigan, to tell us that women will pick James Dean over Jimmy Stewart for a little adventure? But here’s the really weird part. The researchers had the women read passages from the novels of Sir Walter Scott, a dead white guy, that contained descriptions of “cad-like” men and “dad-like” men. It seems no one with a PhD can resist a “duh” study. After this one was done, anthropologists, evolutionary biologists and zoologists couldn’t wait to weigh in with examples from the natural world. It seems many species of female birds pick flashy, brightly colored males for flings while choosing the gray feathered-suit types to set up the nest with. Maybe someone can do a study that shows men would rather have a one-night stand with a Victoria’s Secret model than with a widow over 40 who has six children.

But the best “duh” studies always involve food and health. Not long ago, the U.S. Department of Agriculture announced that women and the elderly have healthier diets than men and young people. If they spent more than 50 bucks of our tax dollars on this one, they should be ashamed. For \$50 a couple of researchers could have gone out to a decent restaurant and used their keen powers of observation to watch couples order dinner. He: “I’ll have the 32-ounce brontosaurus steak, an extra baked potato, sour cream, of course, a side of steak fries, and please bring the chocolate cake with the meal. Thanks.” She: “Just the garden greens for me. With the dressing on the side, please.”

As for the startling conclusion that the elderly eat more health-consciously than the rest of us—talk about redundancy. Who are the elderly? Women. All the men, having eaten brontosaurus steaks for 50 years, are dead. Duh.

Jim Sollisch is a commentator on NPR.

The boy and his gun

There's Charlton Heston when you need him? All across America, 12-year-old boys should be grasping their toy chests and vowing, in the words of the former National Rifle Association president, "From my cold, dead hands."

The recent scare caused by a toy gun that closed down a congressional building has prompted Brooklyn Democratic Congressman Ed Towns to declare a new urgency to passing his proposed ban on "realistic looking" toy guns. His bill would "ban toys which in size, shape or overall appearance resemble real handguns." Next Towns will be after "realistic looking" daggers, bows and arrows, battle axes and lightsabers—which, after all, could confuse Stormtroopers into thinking they are facing a threatening situation.

The spirit behind the Towns bill is outrage that toy guns exist at all. "It seems that the only thing toy guns accomplish," Towns wrote, "is to make it easier to commit a crime or whet kids' appetite for a real gun when they get older. They serve no purpose in society and should be banned." This is false. Toy guns serve an enduring, hallowed purpose—the delight of boys.

Why? It's human nature, the way boys are built. Liberals believe that, given enough persuasion, it somehow can be changed. This is the ambition of an outfit called The Lion & Lamb Project. It sponsors violent-toy "trade-ins" around the country as part of its "toys for peace" campaign. At the trade-ins, children fashion their "violent toys into a dramatic Peace Sculpture."

The average overenthusiastic boy might comment, "Great—and can the Peace Sculpture be turned into a cannon?"

There have indeed been tragic incidents of police accidentally shooting people holding realistic toy guns. But accidents happen. A man in Louisiana was shot when he brandished a cell phone that police mistook for a gun. Should cell phones consequently be banned? It's reckless behavior around police, not the objects involved, that tends to be the problem.

A famous case of applying the opposite reasoning has been playing out in Annapolis, Md. A 7-year-old there attempted to hold up a video store with a toy gun—the most absurd caper since Woody Allen tried a prison break with a gun made of soap in "Take the Money and Run." A city councilwoman promptly called for a ban on such toy guns, earning herself national derision. The first order of business should have been to tell the kid not to try to rob people.

Unfortunately, Towns, the scourge of toy guns, is not some outlier. Similar proposals are bubbling up in state legislatures, and it's impossible to buy a decent toy gun from Toys "R" Us. Too bad. As G.K. Chesterton wrote earlier this century about a different toy and its attraction: "The toy sword is the abstraction and emanation of the heroic, apart from all its horrible accidents. It is the soul of the sword, that will never be stained with blood." The toy-gun banners will never understand that—or the souls of boys.



By **RICH LOWRY**
King Features

Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review.



Should the governor declare an emergency in the state of health care for the people of the CNMI? With the abrupt and total suspension of CHC's family clinic operation, health care for the people of the CNMI has been seriously curtailed. People with ailments that are not life-threatening can no longer get treatment at the Commonwealth Health Center. Patients with chronic conditions can no longer get periodic check-ups at CHC. People due for annual health exams cannot get them at CHC. What's worse, there is no follow-up treatment for people seen in the emergency room. There are no referrals for people seen in the emergency room. There are no means for doctors to determine whether treatment or medication prescribed in the emergency room is helping or whether further adjustments are needed. There is no out-patient care.

The community has been told to use other medical facilities on island. But there's been no information provided as to which facility takes government health insurance, which take Medicare. There's been no assurance that each of the several health care clinics in the CNMI are accredited, are staffed by certified physicians, meet health care standards. Apparently, none of the facilities are authorized to accept Medicaid patients.

Then there's the question of medical records. They are not available on demand at CHC. Often it takes a week or more to obtain them. If one is ill, and needs to see a doctor, having to wait a week for medical records is ludicrous. To force people to see doctors who have no knowledge of the person's medical history, prior treatment, or current medications is fair to neither patient nor doctor. In fact, it could be downright life-threatening.

Does this present a health care crisis for the hundreds of people who would normally be seen and treated at the CHC Family Clinic every week? It most certainly does. Will the governor do anything about it? Only time will tell.

The crisis at CHC is due to a lack of doctors—a lack of family practitioners, to be exact. Family practitioners are trained to treat most general ailments of the general public. They are trained to consider the whole person, and to look for solutions to ailments in the interactions of the parts of the body as a whole. Internists, on the other hand, are trained to look only at the specific areas in which they have received special training—ear, nose and throat, or pulmonary diseases, or renal conditions. Often, they have limited training and limited experience in treating the day-to-day aches and pains of the general public.

Unfortunately, not only are there no family practitioners at CHC—and there have not been for quite some time—there are now only four internists. The number of pediatric physicians and emergency room physicians is not clear—but obviously, it is not enough to take care of the normal patient load at CHC.

Why is there a shortage of doctors? Apparently, there are two reasons: doctors who have come to the CNMI with every intention of working their full tour at CHC have been treated shabbily and have not stayed, and the lack of active, professional recruitment. Concern was once expressed about the wisdom of a practicing physician taking on the administrative responsibilities of running a department. Unfortunately, it would appear that those concerns were well-founded.

Once again, the misguided management practice of promoting individuals by taking them from the field and giving them administrative positions has been proved wrong. A good teacher does not necessarily make a good principal. The classroom loses, and nothing is gained. So, here, a good doctor does not necessarily make a good administrator. The patients lose, and nothing is gained.

I haven't seen the petition—rumored as being circulated—that calls for recall of the governor, but if I did, I'd be tempted to sign it if for no other reason than that I could then initiate a petition for the recall of the person who would become lieutenant governor. Under the CNMI Constitution, if a governor is recalled, the Lt. governor becomes the acting governor and the president of the Senate becomes the acting Lt. governor. And we all know who the president of the Senate is...

However, if the acting Lt. governor were recalled, then the

position would appear to fall to the speaker of the House. Which looks like it could be former speaker Benigno S. Fitial.

But all may not be lost. The Constitution provides that if more than a year in the term of office of the recalled official (governor or Lt. governor) remains, he or she may only hold office until a special election for the office is held. The trick would be to conduct the recall of the acting Lt. governor before the special election to fill the governor's seat was held and before the acting Lt. governor returned to his position as president of the Senate.

If the acting governor (i.e., Diego Benavente) were to run for governor in that special election, there would also have to be an election to replace the acting Lt. governor. But unless the Senate president ran for that position—an unlikely scenario—he would be free to return to being Senate president.

There is, however, another, prior, hurdle. According to the CNMI Constitution, once a recall petition is certified, it must be approved by two-thirds of the eligible voters at the next general election—unless a law calling for an earlier special election is passed by the legislature. The next general election is two years away—too late for the recall move to have much effect. On the other hand, it's pretty clear that no law approving a special election will pass the legislature so long as the unholy Babauta/Manglona alliance remains in place.

In effect, then, dreams, wishes, and complicated scenarios aside, there does not seem to be any point in conducting the recall except as a signal to the governor of the extent of the dissatisfaction and disappointment in his performance to date. Which might be worth the effort all on its own.

Senator Pete P. Reyes' proposal that each of the senatorial districts keep 80 percent of the revenue it generates (instead of the revenue going into the general fund as it does now) and contributes only the remaining 20 percent of its revenue to the general fund is certainly a novel idea. But without more data on just what the impact of such an approach would be on the infrastructure of the three islands—and on what is now supported by the general fund—his idea should remain a topic of discussion, not a topic of legislation, or of an initiative.

Though the behavior of the Senate president and his cronies has only exacerbated the uneasy truce that seems always to have plagued the three islands, taking punitive action is not the answer. At this point, Saipan could perhaps exist on its own, but the other two could not. It is in the interests of all three to find ways to work together. What appear to be needed—on an inter-generational level—are some serious trust-building/strengthening exercises among the three, along with heavy doses of the values and benefits of sharing, of brother/sisterhood, and of trust.

The reality is that in multi-island nations, some subsidy by the larger of the smaller is unavoidable. The correlative reality is that there is more strength in unity than in disunity.

Short takes:

■ Interest in the Sugar Dock renovation and Saipan-Tinian ferry project is growing by leaps and bounds, as they say. A website at www.savesugardock.org has been developed, and e-mails among interested parties have been flooding in-boxes. The project is on the agenda of the 12/9 meeting of CRMO agencies, scheduled for 9am and a public hearing has been set for 12/22 at 6:30pm at the Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe. Stay tuned....

■ Earlier this week the governor apparently sent a note to the Senate president suggesting that his suspension of Saipan's three and Tinian's one senators be revoked. It certainly took him a long time to reach the conclusion that as governor, indeed he does have a role to play in "unify[ing] the community in times of disagreements." The belatedness of his awakening to that fact undercuts any sincerity his statement may have meant to convey.

Too bad the governor doesn't take his role in "unifying the community" seriously enough to take some positive action in that regard (see above).

■ Monday is Constitution Day—the second most important day in the Commonwealth's history—Covenant Day being the first. It offers a prime opportunity to honor and celebrate the provisions of the CNMI government's founding document. Yet again, however, there have been no observances or ceremonies announced—it's just another day off for government employees. How sad.

The writer is a librarian by profession, and a long-term resident of the CNMI. To contact her, send e-mail to ruth.tighe@saipan.com.

Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

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Island Snapshots

Enjoying Saipan's rich marine resources

Text and Photos By JOE RUAK
FOR THE SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Fishers—those who do it for fun and those who do it for livelihood—are having a feast on Saipan's rich marine resources, particularly on the big-eye scad (scientific name: *Selar crumenophthalmus*), or what is more popularly known as atulai in Chamorro and peti in Carolinian.

Atulai are pelagic fish. They live near the sea surface in the open waters of the CNMI and will only come into the reef or channel area if driven by bigger fish, such as barracuda. They prefer clear oceanic waters around the islands. They feed on small shrimps, benthic invertebrates, and foraminiferans when onshore, and zooplankton and fish larvae when offshore, and they travel in compact groups of hundreds of thousands of fish. They can grow to be about a foot long and weigh approximately 2.8 pounds.

This year, the atulai could be fished in the Garapan Fishing Base area. A number of fishermen in their boats are anchored near the reef lines of the fishing base area. They catch up to six individual atulai at a time. Some of these fishermen were approached by Division of Fish and Wildlife staff for pictures, but the request was politely declined citing bad luck may follow if a fisherman was to have his/her catch photographed.

This year, the atulai seem to be more abundant. Factors that may have contributed to this include low fishing



pressure, great recruitment this year, low predation by other fish, or other unknown factors.

There may be more Atulai that came into the Saipan Lagoon this year due to the recently implemented regulation on the banning of fishing nets, such as gill and surround nets. It is premature, at this



time, to pinpoint the real reason for what seems to be an increase in the number of atulai, but one fact remains: Since the ban on fishing nets, more people have been able to enjoy getting a good atulai catch.

Joe Ruak is an aquatic education officer of the Division of Fish and Wildlife under the CNMI Department of Lands and Natural Resources.



CROP PROTECTION

Seminar participants—mostly farmers and government staff—listen intently during a presentation on ways to protect crops from melon flies, which, according to the NMC-CREES, have grown alarmingly abundant on Saipan.

JOHN RAVELO

CHAMBER AWARDEES

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce honored five individuals during its general membership meeting Wednesday. From left are: Jim Whitt, SCC Humanitarian Awardee; slogan contest finalists Caleb Gabbier, Francisco Vasquez, Trevor Kani, and Aretha Tudela; Marianas Visitors Authority managing director Jonas Ogren and Pacific Islands Club's Kanae Quin.

EDITH G. ALEJANDRO



VETERANS WEEK

Gov. Juan N. Babauta signs the proclamation document that endorses Nov. 5-11 as CNMI Veterans Week in a ceremony Wednesday, Nov. 5, 2003, that was graced by officials of the Office of Military and Veterans Affairs.

MARIAN A. MARAYA

Dollars & Sense

Economic growth starting to create jobs

By JOHN M. BERRY
THE WASHINGTON POST



Strong U.S. economic growth finally has begun to bolster the nation's weak labor markets, with the number of payroll jobs up in each of the last three months and the unemployment rate dipping to its lowest level since last spring, the Labor Department reported Friday.

The nation gained 126,000 payroll jobs last month alone, and figures for August and September were revised upward to show a combined rise of 160,000. The three-month gain was the largest since the 2001 recession ended and caused several economists to conclude that after two years of uncertainty, a healthy, sustainable expansion is now underway.

"Today's employment report kicks off the virtuous circle that ensures a solid economic expansion," said Charles Lieberman, chief economist at the Advisors Financial Center LLC in New York. "The economy will now enjoy strong momentum and will not stumble until something comes along, such as a restrictive monetary policy, to restrain it. ... The economy should remain strong, and job growth is likely to accelerate even further over the coming months."

The news of renewed job growth could relieve some of the political pressure on President Bush for presiding over what has been labeled a "jobless recovery." However, Democratic critics were quick to point out that even with the gains of the past three months, the number of payroll jobs is still about 2.4 million lower than when the slump began in March 2001, while the jobless rate, at 6 percent, is nearly two percentage points higher.

Bush and other administration officials were pleased with the report, but acknowledged that the job markets are still depressed.

"So long as any of our citizens who want to work cannot find a job, that says to me, 'We've got a problem,' "



President Bush arrives at CraneWorks, which rents cranes, to speak about the economy and the ongoing war against terror, in Birmingham, Ala., Monday, Nov. 3, 2003. AP

President Bush said at a fund-raiser in North Carolina. "We've had some good news recently about our economy, but we won't rest until everyone who wants to work can find a job."

Rep. Fortney "Pete" Stark of California, the senior Democrat on the Joint Economic Committee, responded to the numbers by saying, "This level of job creation, while better than expected, is probably not strong enough to keep up with the growing labor force, let alone erase the enormous jobs deficit any time soon. ... Unfortunately, we are still a long way from a robust jobs recovery."

Bill Cheney, chief economist at John Hancock Financial Services Inc. in Boston, was less guarded.

"I think we've finally shifted from jobless recovery to sustained expansion," Cheney said. "Today's

employment report is just one month's report, but it's the one we've been waiting for, providing unambiguous good news about the labor market."

"Although we're not yet creating the 200,000 or so new jobs per month needed to steadily bring down the unemployment rate, I see no reason, barring (a) shock, why we shouldn't reach that point by next year," he said.

White House economist N. Gregory Mankiw declined to say exactly how fast either the economy or the number of jobs created each month need to grow to reduce unemployment.

"That depends on a combination of things, including population growth and labor market participation rates," as well as economic growth and gains in productivity, Mankiw said. But he added, "We have already seen

unemployment come down from 6.4 percent (in June) to 6 percent." The rate was 6.1 percent in both August and September.

Mankiw noted that according to the monthly survey of U.S. households on which the unemployment rate is based, the number of people with a job increased by about half a million over the past three months. Over the same period, the labor force expanded by about a quarter million, so both the number of people unemployed and the jobless rate declined.

However, not all the news in Friday's report was positive. Manufacturing employment fell by 24,000, the 39th consecutive monthly drop. Since July 2000, the number of factory jobs is down by nearly 2.8 million, though the size of recent

monthly declines have eased substantially.

Jerry Jasinowski, president of the National Association of Manufacturers, said recent news about economic growth and increases in new orders "make it clear manufacturing is at last emerging from its three-year swoon." But the long string of job losses makes it "equally clear that we've lost a lot of ground and have a long way to go. Though the economy rebounded on all cylinders in the third quarter, manufacturing isn't out of the woods yet."

Last month largest payroll gains were in education and health services, which rose by 56,000; retail trade, up 30,000; employment services, up 29,000; and food services and drinking places, which added 23,000 workers.

In a speech Thursday, Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan, in his most upbeat assessment of the U.S. economic outlook in years, said the economy appears poised for sustained growth strong enough to generate more hiring. The odds "increasingly favor a revival in job creation," he said.

Greenspan noted in his speech that the nation's employers have been able to increase production since the slump ended two years ago without hiring new workers because of an "exceptionally high rate of growth" in productivity, the output of goods and services per hour worked. But now businesses probably are running out of ways to keep productivity rising rapidly at the same time they need to rebuild inventories that were drawn down during this summer's surge in economic growth, he said.

That means, in his view, that firms will need to hire more workers as they step up production.

The length of the average private workweek also rose in September for the first time in several months, rising by six minutes to 33.8 hours. The combination of more jobs and a longer workweek meant that the total number of hours worked increased 0.4 percent, another sign of rising production, economists said.

BUSINESS Briefs

US, Brazil standoff imperils trade goals

WASHINGTON (AP)—The countries with the largest economies in North and South America—the United States and Brazil—are locked in a trade dispute that threatens one of President Bush's top economic goals: creation of the world's largest free trade area spanning the Western Hemisphere.

Because of the wide differences there is concern that a meeting of trade ministers scheduled for the week of Nov. 17 in Miami could end as badly as the September meetings of the World Trade Organization in Cancun, Mexico. Those talks on a global trade deal collapsed after negotiators were unable to narrow the wide gap between rich and poor countries.

"This is a very perilous trade

situation facing the United States and the world," said Fred Bergsten, head of the Institute for International Economics, a Washington-based think tank.

Hoping to break the impasse, the United States on Friday and Saturday will hold hastily arranged discussions with trade ministers from 16 of the 34 countries involved in the effort to craft a Free Trade Area of the Americas.

Both sides sounded positive after a two-hour meeting Friday between U.S. Trade Representative Robert Zoellick and Brazilian Foreign Minister Celso Amorim. Talks with the rest of the trade ministers were to follow at a dinner later in the evening.

Ex-Enron chair Lay to give papers to SEC

WASHINGTON (AP)—After resisting for more than a year, former Enron Chairman Kenneth L. Lay agreed Friday to surrender personal

and corporate records that could be used for criminal and civil investigations in the pursuit of charges against him and others.

The development in the case involving Enron, the company whose bankruptcy led a wave of big corporate scandals that shook investors' confidence, came in an agreement between Lay and the Securities and Exchange Commission. It was approved by U.S. District Judge Royce Lamberth.

Under the accord, the SEC can use leads derived from the documents for any law enforcement purpose, including possible civil action. The Justice Department also gets access to the documents, to pursue possible criminal charges.

Both agencies have been investigating massive alleged accounting fraud at the Texas-based energy company. Enron's bankruptcy in December 2001, the second-largest in U.S. history, cost thousands of jobs and

wiped out hundreds of millions of dollars in retirement savings.

Lay had contended that turning over the documents would violate his Fifth Amendment right against self-incrimination. The records, which he must provide by early next week, include copies of Enron memoranda, papers that contain his handwriting and copies of letters, position papers and drafts of speeches.

SEC chief: 'Findings to date are damning'

BOCA RATON, Fla. (AP)—The chairman of the Securities and Exchange Commission urged the embattled mutual fund industry to work with the SEC to help restore the trust of investors, reiterating his support Friday for reforms that could change the way funds are priced and traded.

Speaking at an industry conference, William Donaldson said his agency's staff is "vigorously ferreting out and

punishing wrongdoers wherever they appear in our markets."

"If there is wrongdoing, we will find it and will punish the perpetrators," Donaldson told members of the Securities Industry Association.

The \$7 trillion fund industry is in the midst of the most serious scandal in decades. State and federal regulators say some funds allowed illegal late trading after the market closed, or gave some customers access to short-term, in-and-out-trades, called market-timing.

Putnam Investments and Strong Financial Corp. are among the most prominent companies so far alleged to have allowed improper trades. Nearly a dozen individuals at those companies as well as Bank of America, Prudential Securities and Fred Alger & Co. have been accused of fund-related wrongdoing.

"The findings to date are damning," Donaldson said.

The Good Life

The Good Life

The Good Life

The Good Life

The Good Life

The Good Life

16 Broadway theaters to comply with ADA



Kevin McGuire sits in his wheelchair showing the media the place where the Music Box Theatre in New York has made room for people with disabilities, Thursday, Sept. 25, 2003.

AP

By VERENA DOBNIK
AP WRITER

Half the theaters on Broadway, including some of its most famous stages, will become fully accessible to disabled people under an agreement announced Thursday between the landlord and the government.

Work on the 16 landmark theaters operated by the Shubert Organization is to be finished by year's end.

The organization has spent \$5 million over several years to improve wheelchair seating areas, restrooms, entrances, exits, ticket windows, concession areas and drinking fountains. But legalities formally bringing the theaters into compliance with the federal Americans with Disabilities Act were completed only this week.

"This is a great example of the public and private sectors working together to remove barriers for all people who desire to enjoy the unique experience of seeing a Broadway show," Shubert Chairman Gerald Schoenfeld said.

The agreement was hailed by Kevin McGuire, a disabilities access consultant who uses a wheelchair who advised Shubert. Since childhood he's had to watch shows from an aisle, on a sloping floor.

"In the dark, people would sometimes trip over me and I got my load of popcorn and soda

over the years," said McGuire, of Boston.

McGuire demonstrated the importance of improvements at The Music Box, which is presenting Tennessee Williams' "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof." After buying tickets at the box office—fitted with a pullout box he could reach—he wheeled himself to one of six reserved orchestra section spots where the once-sloping floor was leveled off to accommodate wheels.

Under ADA regulations, 1 percent of all seats must be set aside for disabled people, as well as another 1 percent for companions; both the best and the least expensive tickets must be available.

Shubert's theaters include some of Broadway's most famous stages, including the Shubert on West 44th Street, where a revival of the musical "Gypsy" is playing, and the Winter Garden on Broadway, home of "Mamma Mia!"

The new access plans are spelled out in two consent decrees between the Shubert Organization and the government that settle civil lawsuits brought against the organization under the ADA, enacted in 1990.

The newest of the theaters was built more than 70 years ago, and modifying them was "an architectural challenge of a very high order," U.S. Attorney James Comey said.

Comey said authorities are now checking disability access at other Broadway theaters.

Going behind movies' greatest lines

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Most people would recognize the line "You can't handle the truth!" as spoken by Jack Nicholson in 1992's "A Few Good Men." But who wrote it?

Then there's the two-word phrase, "As if," from 1995's "Clueless," a line that popularized the "Valley Girl" dialect.

And how about the line, "Forget it, Jake. It's Chinatown," from the 1974 Roman Polanski film, "Chinatown?"

The answers: Nicholson's wrath was penned by Aaron Sorkin; "As if," was the work of Amy Heckerling; and Robert Towne wrote "Chinatown."

A new billboard and advertising campaign to mark the 70th anniversary of the Writers Guild of America seeks to showcase the profession by matching famous movie and TV lines with photos of their authors. The effort is aimed at raising the WGA's profile before it negotiates a new contract with producers.

The "Where it Begins" campaign was the idea of Oscar-winner Marc Norman, who wrote and produced the 1998 film "Shakespeare in Love."

"It came down to the idea that writers have written lines in films and television shows that are so memorable, they have become phrases people use in daily conversation," Norman said. "What writers do is not just provide entertainment, but they change the culture."

The campaign is not aimed at the general public, but rather at studio and television executives and comes as the guild begins to plan strategy for negotiations on a contract that expires in May. The WGA has yet to release a contract wish list, but is expected to press for better pay and more

recognition for its members, particularly those who write for reality TV shows.

Several black-and-white billboards have been placed in key locations in Los Angeles where top executives, directors, agents and actors are likely to see them. The billboards contain the famous lines and a photo of the writer, but not the writer's name or even the name of the film. Ads are also being taken out in trade publications in Los Angeles and New York.

"We wanted to say, 'These are random members, look what they have done,'" Norman said. "We didn't want to take away from the centrality of the Writers Guild logo."

Writers have historically complained about not getting the respect they deserve in Hollywood. During contract negotiations in 2001, writers said it was unfair that film directors get credit for movies, while writers are often not allowed on sets and, in some cases, not invited to premieres.

"I think everybody thinks the directors have all the visual concepts and the actors make up all the lines," said Oscar-winning writer William Goldman, whose lines from 1969's "Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid," grace one of the billboards.

In fact, the money for the current effort comes from a fund established by the Guild and the studios after the 1995 negotiations to provide for a campaign for better appreciation of writers.

Both the WGA and the studios had to agree on the current campaign for the fund to be tapped. The guild hopes to introduce new billboards and ads over the next six months.

"I think anything that makes anybody talk about us is a plus, because they don't," Goldman said.

'Green Eggs and Ham' put into Latin

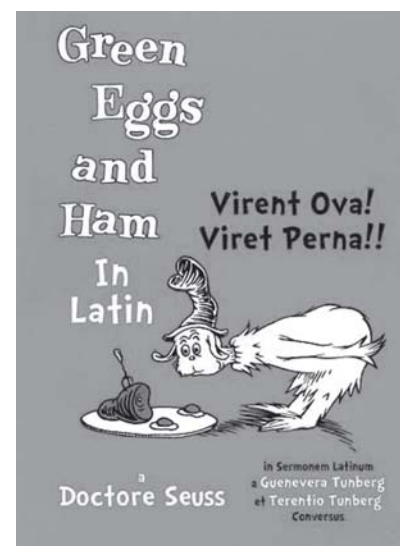
NEW YORK (AP)—"Green Eggs and Ham" is an easy read. After all, the late Theodore Geisel, belovedly known as Dr. Seuss, wrote it after his editor challenged him to do a book in just 50 words.

But have you tried to read it in Latin?

Retitled "Virent Ova! Viret Perna!" the Seuss classic has been rendered into Latin by Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers Inc. of Wauconda, Ill. The target audience is "people who took Latin in school and have fond remembrance of it, teachers and students who take Latin—and, of course, Seuss fans," Kelly Hughes, a spokeswoman for the publisher, said Wednesday.

Two Seuss books that were translated earlier, "How the Grinch Stole Christmas" and "The Cat in the Hat," have sold a combined 60,000 copies in Latin.

Translators Terence and Jennifer Tunberg, husband and wife professors in the Department of Classical Languages at the University of Kentucky, did not aim for a literal interpretation of the tale, in which the character named Sam-I-Am tries to get a friend to try green eggs and ham



AP

This new edition of the classic "Green Eggs and Ham"—written by the late Theodore Geisel, belovedly known as Dr. Seuss—has been rendered into Latin and retitled "Virent Ova! Viret Perna!"

in a box, with a fox, in the rain, on a train, etc.

Instead, they went for a Seusslike rhythm of the eight-syllable lines.

In English, you get, "I do not like green eggs and ham. I do not like them, Sam-I-Am."

In Latin, you get, "Sum 'Pincerna'

nominatus, Famulari ... nunc paratus!"

Sharon Kazmierski, a teacher of Latin and columnist for "The Classical Outlook," the journal of the American Classical League, reviewed "Virent Ova!"

"Instead of literally translating the classic, Jennifer and Terence Tunberg have written this book in the same style that Theodore Geisel might have if he were fluent in neo-Latin. This book doesn't just look like a Seuss book. It sounds like a Seuss book," Kazmierski said.

"Virent Ova! Viret Perna!" is accompanied by Dr. Seuss' original whimsical drawings. A glossary of Latin-to-English vocabulary and a note on "How to Read These Verses" appear at the back of the book.

Whichever recipe one chooses, of course, the result is the same.

Sam's once-defiant sidekick concludes:

"Mihi placent, O Pincerna!

"Virent ova! Viret perna!

"Dapem posthac non arcebo.

"Gratum tibi me praebebo."

In other words:

"I do so like green eggs and ham.

"Thank you, thank you Sam-I-Am!"

Rosy Face

These are homemade treatments that will put a rosy glow on your face.

- Boil fresh rose petals and use this rose water instead of plain water for your skin treatments.

- Prepare a rose facemask by grinding a handful of petals into a paste. Apply on clean skin and leave the application on for 15 to 25 minutes. Then wash with plain water (no soap). Your complexion will be smooth and glowing.

Weekly Beautips

By LIGAYA ALMODIEL

Ligaya Almodiel may be contacted at 233-SKIN or log on to www.ksinternational.biz.



United States

United States

Poll: Optimism on economy boosts Bush

By WILL LESTER
AP WRITER

WASHINGTON (AP)—Americans are growing more optimistic about the economy and that shift is beginning to improve President Bush's standing with voters, according to an Associated Press poll.

People are increasingly comfortable about job security for themselves and for those they know—44 percent now, compared with 35 percent in early October.

And more approve of the way Bush is handling the economy—50 percent compared

with 45 percent earlier, according to the poll conducted for the AP by Ipsos-Public Affairs. Support for his handling of other domestic issues like education, health care and the economy, at 47 percent, has not shifted significantly.

The president's re-election numbers have slightly improved, with 41 percent saying they will definitely vote for him and 36 percent definitely against him. One in five is considering voting for someone else. In mid-November, people were evenly split, 37 percent for and against.

The economy is showing mixed signs of recovery: rapid

growth that surprised most economists last quarter, indications the job market could be turning around, a rebound in the stock market over the past six months. But the nation has lost 2.3 million jobs, the turnaround in employment is uncertain and states hard hit by revenue losses are making cuts.

Baby boomers, college graduates and men in general were among the groups more likely to show signs of increased optimism in the AP-Ipsos poll.

"Confidence is improving," said Sung Won Sohn, chief economist at Wells Fargo in Minneapolis. "It's a trend, not a

blip. While it's not at the level it was in 1999 and 2000, we clearly are coming off the bottom."

The poll found the percentage of people who say they're more comfortable about job security is higher than for those who say they're not, 44 percent to 37 percent. In early October, more were uncomfortable.

If the economy continues to improve, Bush is expected to benefit.

While improvements in Bush's ratings were usually small, the upward shifts were reflected in several poll questions. The public remains

sharply divided about the president, but the economic optimism seems to have halted his slide in the polls. Also, his Thanksgiving trip to visit the troops in Baghdad was generally well-received.

Bush's job approval among registered voters was at 53 percent, with 44 percent disapproving. In mid-November, his approval was at 50 percent, so the shift is not as much as the poll's 3.5-point margin of error for registered voters.

The public's overall mood about the direction of the country was slightly improved from November.

In the new poll, 43 percent

said the country was headed in the right direction, and 51 percent said it was on the wrong track. In mid-November, 38 percent had a positive view, and 56 percent said wrong track.

Divisions on Bush are still apparent.

While a majority of people support the president on foreign policy and the campaign on terror, they remain closely divided on his re-election.

The AP-Ipsos poll of 1,001 adults was taken Dec. 1-3 and has a margin of sampling error of plus or minus 3 percentage points.

ACROSS THE NATION

Possible brainwashing eyed in sniper case

CHESAPEAKE, Va. (AP)—Lee Boyd Malvo could have been vulnerable to brainwashing by sniper mastermind John Allen Muhammad because of a fractured childhood in which his mother often dropped out of his life, a cult expert testified Friday.

"Instability is a factor in indoctrination," said Paul Martin, a psychologist and former cult member himself. "People seek relief from that instability, that sense of insecurity in their life."

Malvo's lawyers are presenting an insanity defense in his capital murder trial, claiming Muhammad brainwashed their client to the point that Malvo could not tell right from wrong.

A series of witnesses testified earlier in the trial that Malvo's mother, Una James, continually moved him from town to town and school to school as she traveled around the Caribbean looking for work.

Martin, who has never interviewed Muhammad or Malvo, offered general testimony on how brainwashing typically occurs, and answered hypothetical questions about how the circumstances of Malvo's life apply in the context of indoctrination. Martin did not give an opinion on whether Malvo was brainwashed.

Shootings along Ohio freeway rise to 14

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP)—Two more shootings have occurred along an interstate highway since a woman was killed on the freeway last month, bringing the number of cases under investigation to 14, authorities said Friday.

A car and a house were hit in the latest shootings, Franklin County sheriff's Chief Deputy Steve Martin said.

On Sunday morning, a woman heard a thud as she drove on Interstate 270 and noticed a bullet hole when she got home, Martin said. She notified police on Tuesday.

In the other shooting, Emma Sader found a bullet hole in the front of her house about a quarter-mile from the highway and a bullet on her living room floor, the deputy said. The shooting was discovered Sunday or Monday.

Police believe the shootings are the first since Gail Knisley, 62, was killed Nov. 25 as she was being driven to a doctor's appointment. She was the only person hit in the shootings.

Source: Prosecutor stabbed 36 times

BALTIMORE (AP)—Federal prosecutor Jonathan Luna was stabbed 36 times in a furious fight for his life before drowning in a Pennsylvania creek, investigators said Friday as they worked to reconstruct his final hours.

A federal law enforcement official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said authorities have not established a motive for the slaying—the first killing of a federal prosecutor in two years.

Investigators are interviewing people connected with cases Luna prosecuted, as well as friends and associates, but no immediate promising leads have come up, the official said.

Luna apparently was attacked after leaving his office in Baltimore around midnight Wednesday, the source said. His body was discovered six hours later and 70 miles away, near his blood-smeared, idling car, according to a police affidavit.

Lancaster County, Pa., coroner Dr. Barry Walp said the 38-year-old assistant U.S. attorney was "brutalized with multiple stab wounds" that could have been caused by a penknife, and then drowned in the creek.



Blaine Delp walks in the streets of York, Pa. on his way to work on a snowy Friday, Dec. 5, 2003. The first real winter storm of the season swept up the East Coast on Friday, dumping snow and clogging road.

AP

First big storm of season hits Northeast

By TANIA FUENTEZ
AP WRITER

The Northeast's first major winter storm brought a blustery surge of sleet and snow Friday, closing schools, clearing store shelves and making a mess on highways.

Forecasters said the system threatened to deliver an even heavier blow over the weekend, with up to 18 inches of snow forecast in parts of New England.

"We're all set," said Richard Christiano of Lexington, Mass. "I just bought 100 pounds of ice melt and we took out our snow shovels last night. We'll be getting a good night's sleep and getting ready for some shoveling."

The National Weather Service said the complex storm system brought in snow and sleet, changing to rain in some places as temperatures warmed through the day. Along the mid-Atlantic coast, hit by the first round early Friday, a second wintry punch was expected to strike late in the day.

"We're looking at a classic coastal storm, a nor'easter, if you will, that should move in around midnight and intensify as it

moves up the Northeast corridor," said meteorologist Barbara Watson.

"The further north you go, the more accumulation you'll get, so that in parts of Maine, you could be measuring it in feet," she said.

Forecasters in Massachusetts predicted up to 18 inches of snow through Sunday. Near-blizzard conditions were in the offing for parts of Maine and New Hampshire. In New Jersey, up to 14 inches of snow was forecast.

The storm had already brought a mixture of ice, freezing rain, sleet and snow in mountain regions of North Carolina, Virginia and West Virginia on Thursday. At least one death was blamed on the storm, that of a 23-year-old man who was killed in an accident on a slick road in Virginia.

Philadelphia drivers endured a sloppy rush-hour crawl Friday morning and braced for more snow on Saturday. The combination of snow, sleet and rain caused so many fender-benders in the city that a radio traffic reporter called it "a \$500 deductible day."

For New York City, the temperature hit the 32-degree freezing point as the first flakes

descended on the Christmas tree at Rockefeller Center.

Ahead of the storm, many schools sent students home early and grocery and hardware stores filled with shoppers.

By noon Friday, the Home Depot in Glastonbury, Conn., had sold most of its snow blowers and employees were busy restocking shelves with shovels and bags of salt.

The storm dumped as much as 8 inches of snow and sleet in western Virginia, causing havoc on highways and forcing schools to close.

The same was true in West Virginia, where ice, freezing rain, sleet and snow made travel difficult across much of the state Friday. Up to 14 inches of snow was forecast in the state's eastern mountains.

Three to 5 inches of snow fell across North Carolina's western mountains Thursday, where schools closed from Asheville to the Tennessee line.

To the West, wind gusting to 80 mph Thursday toppled trees and cut power to more than 250,000 customers in western Washington state. One person was seriously injured when a tree fell on a car.

Two flu shot makers run out of vaccine

WASHINGTON (AP)—The two makers of flu shots in the United States said Friday they have run out of vaccine and will not be able to meet a surge in demand resulting from fears of a particularly bad flu season.

Nevertheless, the companies said people who have put off getting their shots may still be able to find them, since distributors and doctors' offices may still have some left.

The companies, Chiron and Aventis Pasteur, together made about 80 million doses of the injected vaccine, which ordinarily would be enough to take care of U.S. demand.

The companies said they cannot make more vaccine this year, because the process takes four months. By that time, the flu season would be over.

Another alternative is the FluMist, the more expensive inhaled version of the vaccine. Its maker, MedImmune Vaccines, made between 4 million and 5 million doses this year. Spokeswoman Jamie Lacey said that as of Nov. 18, the company had sold 400,000 doses, and "there is still a wide supply available."

The nasal spray is recommended only for healthy people ages 5-49, and disease doctors are urging it as an option to save the traditional vaccine for more at-risk people.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said that in a typical year, between 70 million and 75 million Americans get the shots, and the record is 80 million.

Across the Globe

Taiwan to vote on China missile threat

By WILLIAM FOREMAN
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

TAIPEI, Taiwan (AP)—Taiwan’s president has decided to hold a referendum on March 20 that asks voters to demand that China remove hundreds of missiles aimed at the island, a presidential spokesman said Saturday.

Until now, the president has not said

what issues would be on the referendum, authorized under a new law that angered China.

“The missile issue will be on the referendum. That’s for sure,” the spokesman, James Huang, told The Associated Press.

President Chen Shui-bian announced last week that he planned to use a new law that gives him the power to hold a “defensive referen-

dum” when the island’s sovereignty faces an imminent threat.

China and Taiwan split amid civil war in 1949, and Beijing has threatened to use force to make the island unify. To back up its threats, China has deployed hundreds of missiles across from Taiwan, just 100 miles off China’s coast.

Chen’s Democratic Progressive Party had said the president would

announce the ballot issue at a campaign rally on Sunday night. During the past week, the president hinted several times that the referendum would deal with the missile threat.

On Saturday, the presidential spokesman said that Chen was adding a new twist to the missile referendum. Huang said the president would consider calling off the March 20 referendum if China redeployed

the missiles and renounced the use of threat against Taiwan.

But many analysts believe that China fears that if it drops the war threats, Taiwan’s people will be encouraged to seek full-fledged independence.

Several polls have reported that a large number of Taiwanese don’t want to unify with China, but they oppose seeking formal independence because they fear it could start a war.

GMA will no longer stop executions

By HRVOJE HRANJSKI
AP WRITER

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Philippine President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo responded to a public outcry over a recent spate of ransom kidnappings by announcing Friday that she would no longer stop executions of people convicted of serious crimes.



Philippine President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo crosses out two captured kidnap-for-ransom leaders Allan Niegas, second from right, and Vilmor Catamco, right, who were on the ten most wanted list of the newly-created National Anti-kidnapping Task Force, shortly after presenting the suspects to the media Friday, Dec. 5, 2003 at the National Police headquarters at suburban Quezon city, northeast of Manila, Philippines.

Arroyo imposed a moratorium on capital punishment shortly after taking office in January 2001, winning applause from the influential Roman Catholic church and human rights organizations.

Later that year, she bowed to public pressure and said convicted kidnappers could be put to death; however, no executions have taken place since.

In her statement Friday, Arroyo broadened her lifting of the moratorium to include other crimes for which the death penalty can be imposed, such as rape and murder.

“Much as I am averse, as a matter of moral principle, to the taking of human lives in this manner - the president must yield to the higher public interest when dictated by extraordinary circumstances,” she said.

“The pain of victims of heinous crimes has spread all over the national community, and I shall not turn my back against the cry for just retribution under the law,” the statement said.

There are more than 1,000 convicts on death row in the Philippines. Deputy presidential spokesman Ricardo Saludo

said 35 are already scheduled for execution, to be carried out by lethal injection. The first two have been convicted of kidnapping, he said.

Arroyo’s spokesman Ignacio Bunye attributed the president’s decision to a surge in ransom kidnappings. Most have targeted wealthy Chinese-Filipino families, who have responded with an aggressive campaign for a crackdown.

Previously the president believed the more effective solution would be to step up prosecution, improve the correctional system, and strengthen government relations with the community, Bunye said.

Rep. Loretta Ann Rosales, head of

the House Committee on Human Rights, said the decision was politically motivated. Arroyo is running for re-election in May.

“It reflects on her hesitation or her inability to look at this as a question of policy. Is she out to please a particular sector?” Rosales asked, adding she would push for a legislation to repeal the death penalty.

The death penalty, abolished in 1987, was reinstated in 1994 for “heinous” crimes such as rape, kidnapping, murder and drug trafficking. Opposition by human rights groups held up executions until 1999. In early 2000, seven convicts were put to death, most for rape.

UN culture agency plans to denounce anti-Jewish text

By FRANCES D’EMILIO
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

ROME (AP)—The U.N. culture agency plans to denounce the so-called “Protocols of the Elders of Zion” amid reports that the text, long dismissed as a forgery to discredit Jews, was on display at a prominent Egyptian library.

UNESCO has asked Egypt’s Alexandria Library about allegations that the book was displayed along with the Torah, or Jewish holy book, and that the library director allegedly made anti-Semitic comments.

“Protocols” tells of a Jewish plot to take over the world. Historians have long said the work as a forgery concocted by Czar Nicholas II’s secret police to blame Russia’s troubles on Jews.

No one could be reached for comment at the library Friday because it was closed.

UNESCO’s director-general,

Koichiro Matsuura planned to denounce the book this weekend at a seminar in Venice pegged to the 100th anniversary of the forgery. The seminar was organized in part by the Simon Wiesenthal Center of Los Angeles.

The book “continues to exercise its terrible power as an instrument of anti-Semitism,” Matsuura’s statement says, according to a copy obtained by The Associated Press.

“It is instructive because it demonstrates yet again that, given the necessary mind frame, people can be induced to believe what has been formally refuted, which can then be used to justify the most unspeakable atrocities,” his message said.

Matsuura’s statement made no reference to the Egyptian case, but it was being delivered after UNESCO received complaints about the alleged Alexandria exhibit.

Matsuura’s spokeswoman, Muriel

de Pierrebouurg, said Friday that she received 15 e-mails alleging the book had been on display in an inappropriate manner at the Alexandria Library and that the head of the exhibit made anti-Semitic comments in an interview.

In his statement to the Venice seminar, Matsuura urges measures against the “literature of hate” while preserving the principle of freedom of expression.

The Alexandria library, which opened last year, attempts to recreate what was a major center of scholarship in ancient times. It has regular displays on literature and art, and has a rare documents collection available to scholars.

Last year, the Egyptian and Israeli presidents exchanged letters over a show on Egyptian state television that draws on the “Protocols” book, with the Israelis insisting the show was anti-Semitic and the Egyptians defending it as an example of free expression.

AROUND THE WORLD

Bomb on Russian commuter train kills 42

YESSSENTUKI, Russia (AP)—A shrapnel-filled bomb believed strapped to a suicide attacker ripped apart a commuter train Friday near Chechnya, killing 42 people and wounding nearly 200 in what Russia’s president called an attempt to disrupt weekend parliamentary elections.

The blast near this city in southern Russia was the latest in a series of suicide bombings and other attacks that have foiled security measures and killed 250 people in and around the rebellious region of Chechnya and in Moscow in the past year.

The remains of the suspected bomber were found with grenades still attached to his legs, Federal Security Service chief Nikolai Patrushev said. Three women also were involved in the attack—two who jumped from the train just before the blast, and one who was gravely injured and unlikely to survive, he said.

Authorities suspect other accomplices may have been watching from cars near the site of the blast, which threw passengers from the train and sent its second car crashing onto its side, trapping victims beneath the buckled wreckage.

The explosion tore through the train around 8 a.m., a rush-hour attack that seemed calculated to kill and injure as many people as possible. The train was about 500 yards from the station at Yessentuki, 750 miles south of Moscow, and officials said many passengers were students from local schools and universities.

Tokyo Disneyland roller coaster derailed

TOKYO (AP)—A roller coaster derailed Friday at Tokyo Disneyland, but none of the 12 riders on board were injured, the park’s operator said.

The rear car of the 12-car roller coaster popped off the tracks near the end of the popular “Space Mountain” ride, said Keiko Namikoshi, a spokeswoman for operator Oriental Land Co., adding that the train came to a halt and all aboard were safely guided out of the cars.

It was the first accident on Space Mountain at Tokyo Disneyland, which opened in 1983, Namikoshi said.

Tokyo Disneyland suspended operation of the ride after a September accident in California on Disneyland’s

Big Thunder Mountain Railroad roller coaster that killed one person and injured 10 others. Officials then conducted safety checks and confirmed the Tokyo ride was safe to operate.

Palestinians haggle over cease-fire plans

CAIRO, Egypt (AP)—Palestinians faced the tough job Friday of deciding on a workable cease-fire offer to Israel after Islamic and secular factions presented widely varying views.

Egypt is pushing for quick agreement on a halt to all attacks that its intelligence chief can take to Washington next week in hopes of winning U.S. backing.

Both the United States and Egypt see a cease-fire as a way to revive negotiations on the “road map,” the peace plan backed by the international community to end five decades of conflict and create a Palestinian state.

The Palestinian factions are holding talks aimed at producing a cease-fire, with Egypt applying pressure and Israel hinting it could reduce its own military actions in the West Bank and Gaza Strip if a truce were declared.

2 Koreas agree on railway signal system

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—South and North Korea agreed Friday to start building signal, communication and electricity systems for their cross-border railway in the second quarter of next year.

Friday’s agreement brightened the prospects for opening a rail line across the heavily fortified border for the first time in over half a century. It was reached at the end of three days of talks between the two governments at a resort hotel on the South’s east coast, the eighth round of such talks.

The Koreans began work on re-linking their rail lines following their historic summit in 2000, and finally reconnected them at a border point north of Seoul in June.

But it remains unclear when trains will start running on the cross-border railway amid lingering mistrust and political tensions over the communist North’s nuclear weapons program.

The cross-border railway runs through the Demilitarized Zone, a buffer created at the end of the 1950-53 Korean War to keep opposing armies apart. The last train to cross the border did so shortly before the outbreak of the war, which ended in an uneasy armistice.

Good Housekeeping

Designer shows La-Z-Boy some new moves



The Arc recliner, left, is part of the Todd Oldham collection at La-Z-Boy. At right, aluminum legs and a slim silhouette give Oldham's Dexter sofa a modern look.

By **JURA KONCIUS**
THE WASHINGTON POST

Do lava lamps go with La-Z-Boys?

Designer Todd Oldham thinks so—at least with his La-Z-Boys, the mod 62-piece furniture collection he just unveiled for the firm at the fall furniture market here.

Oldham, the New York fashion designer noted for his frisky dorm furniture for Target, wristwatches for Fossil and nail polish for Urban Decay, may seem an unlikely pairing with the company best known for wide-bodied, overstuffed recliners.

But the Michigan-based La-Z-Boy, the country's largest manufacturer of upholstered furniture—and the world's largest producer of recliners—was after a look that would bring in a younger, funkier consumer. They wanted something they could proudly advertise in hip shelter mags like Nest or on the SciFi Channel or MTV.

"We had to get a new customer to consider La-Z-Boy," said Doug Collier, the firm's vice president of marketing. "We want the kind of customer that rips ads out of In Style magazine."

So they hired Oldham, 42, who made his name doing flashy fashion on Seventh Avenue, to design a licensed collection of affordable furniture and accessories in bold colors and inventive shapes: cool sectionals, sleek chairs with bentwood arms, convertible daybeds.

An ottoman called the Toybox opens into a trunk with fitted storage for DVDs and CDs. Accessories include rah-rah rugby lap blankets, faux leather mirrors, cone-shaped lamps and polka-dot rugs.

La-Z-Boy executives say almost everything in the line, which will pop up in stores next spring, will be priced under \$1,000.

The boyish Oldham, dressed in jeans and electric blue sneakers, was the big draw at the La-Z-Boy showroom at the International Home Furnishings Market, which ended last week. More than 100 design magazine writers and newspaper reporters crowded into the showroom auditorium for the unveiling of his collection.

John Case, president of La-Z-Boy, introduced Oldham and noted that the standing-room-only crowd was a first in the history of the 76-year-old company, whose average customer is 50-plus years old. While in recent years the firm has been wooing forty-something customers, especially women, with scaled-down, more attractive versions of its big-guy recliners, Case said, the Oldham line is a major departure. The company is hoping the designer's \$99 ottomans and \$599 sleek chairs will attract under-40 shoppers who have been spending their furniture dollars at Ikea and Pottery Barn.

"We wanted to hook up with somebody who understands this market," said Case. "Somebody who is

hip and who knows how to make things practical. We looked at other names. But Todd Oldham's Target experience and his understanding of affordability made this a good fit."

The designer then led the press past acres of the company's signature product—well-padded recliners sought out more for comfort than chic—to the display of his new line.

Exhibit A was the Snap sofa, a low, lean convertible piece with metal braces that pull off and cushions that can be rearranged into six configurations, from an armless chaise to a sleeping station. Snap comes in two lengths, 60 inches or 94 inches, with a starting price of \$899.

"If you are space challenged, it's fun to reconfigure the Snap for a party," Oldham told the crowd. "My goal was to create something that looks three times more expensive than it is."

Warren Shoulberg, editor in chief of HFN, the newsweekly of the home furnishings industry, was among those who found the collection ambitious for such a traditional furniture manufacturer.

"It's certainly an odd couple, but I think they executed it very well. La-Z-Boy is a huge company, and they had been moving in the direction of getting away from its exclusive reliance on the big, dumb recliner market. This product is right for the younger demographic."

Oldham's collection includes a \$99 cube available in more than 150 textured fabrics. There's not a chintz or tapestry

among them; most are done in earthy, retro colors—moss green, teal, pumpkin—that hark back to the '60s. Many take inspiration from mid-century modern motifs. There are animal prints, geometrics, wide-wale corduroys and parasol prints, plus stripes that look as if they came off a Kate Spade handbag. There are microfibers brushed to look like Ultrasuede, faux leathers and pseudo-mohairs that are actually hardwearing synthetics. "I know it's a pretty out-there color palette," said Oldham, "but it's right for these pieces."

Oldham, who is from Dallas, has been designing clothing and other products for 20 years. He designed sexy outfits worn by celebs such as Julia Roberts and Uma Thurman. In 1998, he created a Todd Oldham Barbie for Mattel. But he made his biggest mass-market splash by doing a dorm-room collection for Target in 2002, featuring high-style lamps, desk accessories and bulletin boards at that chain's characteristically low prices. The Target line was expanded this year, extending Oldham's name recognition to an ever-wider audience.

He also has appeared as a fashion and decor expert on MTV shows as well as on NBC's "Today" show. Before partnering with La-Z-Boy on a full collection, Oldham, along with other fashion designers, created a custom recliner for the company that was auctioned for charity.



Quick way to cover windows

New homeowners, dorm dwellers and anyone else interested in covering windows with as little muss, fuss and money as possible can find readymade privacy behind opaque accordian-pleated paper shades. Most such shades are held at the desired height with a metal clip. Here's a better way: A new product, QuickShade, can be raised or lowered with a pull cord just like Venetian blinds or conventional shades.

QuickShades, made by Levelor/Kirsch Window Fashions, are available in three- and four-foot widths, but can be trimmed to fit narrower windows. Installed with a peel-and-stick adhesive strip, they are \$4.97 to \$5.97 at Lowe's, Wal-Mart and Family Dollar Stores. (*Washington Post*)



Caulking it up

Applying caulk can be intimidating. For many homeowners and do-it-yourselfers, it's just too messy. GE's Caulk-It attempts to eliminate mess from those otherwise simple caulk jobs. Featuring a squeeze-tube applicator—no caulk gun is needed—caulk is easily applied, with just the right size bead. The offset nozzle is pre-cut for a narrow bead, and if a larger bead is needed, the nozzle opening can be easily cut.

GE's new paintable latex formula is easier to tool (setting or smoothing the bead by wiping with a wet index finger). The applicator can be resealed and stored for future use. GE Caulk-It runs \$5 to \$6 a tube and is available at hardware stores, home centers and paint stores. (*Newsday*)

Apple cobbler wears a new crown

By **PHILOMENA CORRADENO**
KING FEATURES

Here's a takeoff on the classic apple pie with cheese that's even more delicious and appealing—an apple cobbler topped with Cheddar cheese biscuits. Admittedly, it's not something you can toss together when you're in a rush, but it makes a great weekend dessert and is a lot easier than the recipe looks. It was created by husband and wife chef-author team, David Page and Barbara Shinn.

Apple Cobbler With Cheddar Biscuit Topping

Topping:
3 cups all-purpose flour
1 tablespoon granulated sugar
1 tablespoon baking powder

3/4 teaspoon salt
1/2 pound unsalted butter, chilled, cut in 1/2-inch pieces (2 sticks)
1 1/2 cups finely shredded sharp Cheddar cheese
1 cup cold buttermilk
■ Combine flour, sugar, baking powder and salt in medium bowl. Add butter and rub mixture with fingertips until mixture resembles coarse meal. Toss in Cheddar. Gradually stir in buttermilk, mixing until dough begins to firm up. Wrap in wax paper or plastic wrap and refrigerate until ready to use. Prepare Cobbler (Recipe follows).

Apple Cobbler

4 tablespoons unsalted butter
1 (3-inch) cinnamon stick
1 teaspoon minced lemon zest
8 to 10 small Granny Smith apples,



peeled, cored and thinly sliced (about 1/4 inch)

3/4 cup packed light-brown sugar
1 recipe Cheddar Biscuit Dough (recipe above)
1/8 cup granulated sugar
■ Melt butter in large deep skillet

over medium heat. Add cinnamon stick and lemon zest, then add apples, tossing to coat evenly with butter. Sprinkle brown sugar over apples and continue tossing them in skillet until sugar is evenly distributed. Continue stirring until sugar has dissolved, about 5 minutes. Remove skillet from heat and discard cinnamon stick.

■ Spread apples in 2-quart baking dish. Let cool to room temperature to thicken.

■ Preheat oven to 375 F. Drop biscuit dough by tablespoon onto cooled apples, covering apples completely. Sprinkle granulated sugar over biscuit dough. Bake until top is golden brown, about 30 minutes. Serve cobbler warm or at room temperature. Serve with ice cream, if desired. Makes 10 to 12 servings.

Entertainment

Year sees not-so-proud moments in Hollywood

By **PATRICK GOLDSTEIN**
LOS ANGELES TIMES

Even without a new Madonna movie, it was another embarrassing year for Hollywood. What else could you say about a year in which a Los Angeles Police Department captain was charged with peddling bootleg DVDs, Britney Spears posed on the cover of Entertainment Weekly wearing a white bustier with a red kabala bracelet and Hollywood celebs were exposed after they'd raked in free jewelry and jet trips for appearing at charity fund-raisers?

There were more substantial embarrassments as well. At the height of the Oscar race this spring, Miramax was caught having one of its publicists script a gushy testimonial from aged director Robert Wise singing the praises of "Gangs of New York" director Martin Scorsese. Jack Valenti's fabled Oscar screener ban ended as a crushing defeat for the outgoing Motion Picture Association of America czar, with two months of scathing criticism culminating in a federal judge's surprise decision to effectively quash the ban.

Then there was media martyr Mel Gibson, who complained bitterly that academics and critics were attacking his religious epic, "The Passion," sight unseen—but would show the film only to the most carefully selected friendly audiences, ranging from Harry Knowles to the pope. (Apparently he was unable to locate Robert Wise.)

At least Mel still has hopes of turning the critics around before the

film's Feb. 25 release. Imagine what it must have been like to wake up and read the reviews if you were Ben Affleck and J.Lo in "Gigli," Mike Myers in "The Cat in the Hat," Cameron Diaz or Drew Barrymore in "Charlie's Angels: Full Throttle," Kate Hudson in "Alex & Emma," Paul Walker in "Timeline," Hilary Swank in "The Core," Heath Ledger in "The Order" or Angelina Jolie in, well, anything she did this year.

And when it came to bad press, how about the 5,791 stories devoted to the ins and outs of Ben and J.Lo's nonwedding, which by my rough estimate represented about 5,000 more stories than were written about the war on terrorism or the ballooning federal budget deficit.

But, hey, in Hollywood everybody has his priorities straight. Perhaps that's why staffers at the Fox Cable Network were threatened with criminal charges last month—not because they were selling pirated DVDs but because someone was disseminating an e-mail that listed the take-home pay of everybody who worked in their division. Here's our annual look at some of the year's dubious achievements and other strange-but-true moments:

■ Imagine what would've happened if he'd thought he was an agent for Endeavor: Awaiting trial for murder after killing filmmaker Jawed Wassel, cutting up his body and packing the parts in boxes, producer Nathan Chandler Powell told Newsday that he killed Wassel because he suffered from post-Sept. 11 traumatic stress

and "I suspected he was an agent for the Taliban."

■ Maybe he hasn't looked at his recent reviews: Asked what he thought of Arnold Schwarzenegger's election as governor of California, Ben Affleck told Entertainment Weekly: "I suppose it means that if I did run for office, no one could say I was the worst actor ever to be elected."

■ If only Rush Limbaugh had this good an explanation: When Courtney Love was taken by police to a hospital for a suspected drug overdose after breaking windows in an attempt to enter her boyfriend's Beverly Hills home, her publicist explained the incident by saying that Love had taken a dose of prescription medication "she thought was 2 milligrams and turned out to be 20, became alarmed and went to a hospital, where she spent several hours reading a biography of Marlon Brando."

■ And the video of his heart bypass was a lot funnier than "Gigli": The day after Vincent Gallo told Cannes Film Festival reporters that he wasn't sorry about anything he had said about the negative critical reaction to his film "Brown Bunny," except for putting a curse on Roger Ebert's colon, Ebert responded: "When I had my last colonoscopy, they let me watch it on a little TV and it was far more entertaining than 'Brown Bunny.'"

■ Whoops, we thought there was at least one Hollywood movie in production that wasn't based on a comic book: This summer Premiere magazine ran a correction saying: "In our Power

List, we stated that producer Lorenzo di Bonaventura's upcoming project, 'Constantine,' is based on the life of the Roman emperor. It is, in fact, based on the DC Comics comic-book character, John Constantine."

■ And that was before she tied me up and made me watch the Paris Hilton sex tape: In a \$10 million divorce-court filing against Liza Minnelli this fall, producer David Gest called himself "a victim of domestic violence," citing an incident in which he says Minnelli drank a bottle of vodka before "berating him and beating him about the head and face with her fists without relenting."

■ We're guessing it wasn't one of Dennis Quaid's old fishing hats: After seeing a scene from "In the Cut" in which Meg Ryan discovers her half-sister's head in a bag at the sister's apartment, one scribe at a Toronto Film Festival news conference asked the actress, "Meg, when you held the bag with the severed head, what was actually in the bag?"

■ But I did find myself listening to a lot of Liza Minnelli records: Responding to charges in the New York Post that he missed a day of shooting the 20th Century Fox film "X2" after being incapacitated by some sort of medication, director Bryan Singer told Entertainment Weekly: "I did not take a drug that made me woozy and incapable of working."

■ You mean, does Sept. 11 compare to something really important, like my opening-weekend box office?: When asked by Rolling Stone if the Sept. 11

terrorist attacks had an effect on him, Quentin Tarantino responded: "9/11 didn't affect me, because there's, like, a Hong Kong movie (where) they work in a whole big thing where they blow up a giant skyscraper. ... And the shot almost is a semi-duplicate shot of 9/11. I actually enjoyed inviting people over to watch the movie and not telling them about it."

■ Maybe this is why we don't look as good as Faye Dunaway: When a waiter offered her a choice of cuisine at Clive Davis' Grammy bash, Dunaway removed a digital food scale from her purse and weighed each portion, saying she was on a diet that allowed only 4 ounces of protein a day. The man sitting next to her said she perused his plate, saying, "I'll trade you my broccoli for a tomato."

■ Or maybe you should check the guest room at Vincent Gallo's house: When Sean Connery was asked at the premiere of "The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen" if he knew the whereabouts of the film's director, Stephen Norrington, with whom he'd been feuding, the legendary actor responded, "Have you checked the local asylum?"

■ Personally, we got a little tingle just thinking about the poster: Shopping a feature film called "Ashes" that involves a woman's "comic but meaningful" quest for joy and spiritual fulfillment, Goldie Hawn explained to Variety: "It's like an orgasm. You never know when it's going to come, but it's always exciting."

The Washington Post's Top 10 Films of 2003

Pulitzer Prize-winning movie critic Stephen Hunter's list of the 10 best films of 2003:

1. "Cold Mountain"
2. "Kill Bill: Vol. 1"
3. "The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King"
4. "Lost in Translation"
5. "21 Grams"
6. "Bus 174"
7. "Shattered Glass"
8. "Dirty Pretty Things"
9. "Open Range"
10. "Bad Santa"



Movie critic Ann Hornaday's list of the 10 best films of 2003:

1. "Lost in Translation"
2. "American Splendor"
3. "Whale Rider"
4. "Dirty Pretty Things"
5. "Spellbound"
6. "Capturing the Friedmans"
7. "The Station Agent"
8. "Raising Victor Vargas"
9. "Holes"
10. "Finding Nemo"



Jackson: It's OK to sleep with kids

By DAVID BAUDER
AP TELEVISION WRITER

Michael Jackson told CBS' "60 Minutes" that he still believes it's acceptable to sleep with children and that he would "slit my wrists" before he would hurt a child.

Jackson, arrested Nov. 20 on suspicion of child molestation, denied the charges against him during an interview with Ed Bradley conducted Christmas night and set to air Sunday. CBS released a portion of the interview on Friday.

Jackson, 45, is charged with seven counts of performing lewd or lascivious acts upon a child under 14 and two counts of administering an intoxicating agent. He remains free on \$3 million bail.

Asked by Bradley if it was

still OK to sleep with children given the charges against him, Jackson answered, "Of course."

"Why not?" he said. "If you're going to be a pedophile, if you're going to be Jack the Ripper, if you're going to be a murderer, it's not a good idea. That I am not."



Jackson

"Before I would hurt a child, I would slit my wrists," Jackson also said.

CBS confirmed comments about the alleged victim that Jackson's attorney, Mark Geragos, said his client made during the interview: "I didn't sleep in bed with the child. Even if I did it's OK. I slept on the floor. I give the bed to the child."

The pop singer, interviewed in a Los Angeles hotel room, said the police search of his Neverland Ranch in California had been overdone and so

violated his privacy that it will never be the same for him.

"I won't live there ever again," he said. "It's a house now. It's not a home anymore. I'll only visit."

Meanwhile on Friday, CBS also announced that it had rescheduled a Jackson music special that had been abruptly postponed last month after the molestation charges surfaced. The special will air on Friday, Jan. 2.

The interview was a coup for "60 Minutes," which has been enjoying a ratings renaissance the past few months in its final year under the direction of founding executive producer Don Hewitt.

Bradley had been pursuing an interview with Jackson even before the molestation charges. The CBS newsman traveled to Neverland last February for an interview, but Jackson got cold feet and

canceled it at the last minute.

The existence of the musical special, which had been scheduled for the day before Thanksgiving and was largely complete before being postponed, was an unusual factor in landing a widely sought interview.

CBS would not have rescheduled the entertainment special if Jackson hadn't addressed the molestation charges with the network's news division, CBS entertainment spokesman Chris Ender said.

The criminal case won't be discussed during the special, "Michael Jackson Number Ones." The special was to include Jackson performance footage, but that filming wasn't completed before November's postponement. The special also includes interviews with Dick Clark, Beyonce Knowles, Mary J. Blige and others about Jackson's impact on pop culture.

Teenage girl overwhelmed by too many discoveries

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

DEAR ABBY: I recently discovered I am a lesbian. Unfortunately, I am already pregnant with my boyfriend's baby. We were both drunk when this happened, and it was a horrible mistake. My parents nearly disowned me when they realized I was going to have a child. (We are devout Christians.)

I don't know how they'll react when I tell them I am a lesbian. Abby, I am afraid to tell them and don't know how. Please help me find a way.



Dear Abby

TEENAGE LESBIAN IN COLORADO

DEAR TEEN: Stop dwelling on yourself for a moment. Although the teen years are supposed to be a time of self-discovery, it's time you got off the fast track for a while. Your parents are shell-shocked enough as it is, and you have serious responsibilities ahead. After your baby arrives, my intuition tells me you'll be too busy for much of a sex life (homosexual or heterosexual).

Once your family has stabilized again, there is still time to come out to your family. Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (P-FLAG) can provide you with literature that will make it easier to talk to them. P-FLAG can also offer the emotional support they will need. The address is: 1726 M St. NW, Suite 400, Washington, D.C., 20036. The Web site is www.pflag.org.

DEAR ABBY: I have a serious anger problem. When my fiancé and I first met, it was love at first sight. But after six months, everything he does seems to tick me off.

In the beginning, I didn't show him my ugly side. I didn't want to scare him off. Then he said he wanted me to be more open, so I let it all out. Now I'm letting it out every single day. I get mad when he does or says the same things I do or say to him, and I'll isolate myself or give him the silent treatment.

I think I have a serious mental and/or anger problem, but I don't know where it comes from. Everybody thinks I'm crazy. They say, "I don't know when you're happy or mad because you have the same expression."

Maybe they're right. Maybe I'm not happy because I haven't accomplished anything in my life. (I am only 22.) Please help me.

LASHING OUT IN NORTH CAROLINA

DEAR LASHING OUT: You are only 22. It's too early to declare yourself a failure. However, it is difficult to be loving to others if you don't like yourself.

Before you and your fiancé go any further, you must get to the root of what is really bothering you. A call to your local department of social services or mental health association will help you locate a counselor you can afford. A course in anger management would also be helpful for both of you. Please don't wait. You have a right to be happy.

DEAR ABBY: Please inform your readers that if their child is enlisting in the armed services or plans to go overseas, the parents should also get passports.

Our son left to serve in Iraq. He is now in Germany for medical reasons, and we cannot get to him.

Passports take six weeks to process. They can be expedited for a hefty fee, but they still take two weeks to arrive.

LEARNED LATE IN WEST LAFAYETTE, OHIO

DEAR LEARNED: That's a helpful suggestion, and I'll pass it along.

P.S. Your son is in my prayers. Please let me know how he's doing.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

For everything you need to know about wedding planning, order "How to Have a Lovely Wedding." Send a business-size, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$5 (U.S. funds only) to: Dear Abby, Wedding Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included.)

Winslet, Mendes new parents of baby boy

Actress Kate Winslet and her husband, director Sam Mendes, are the parents of a baby boy.

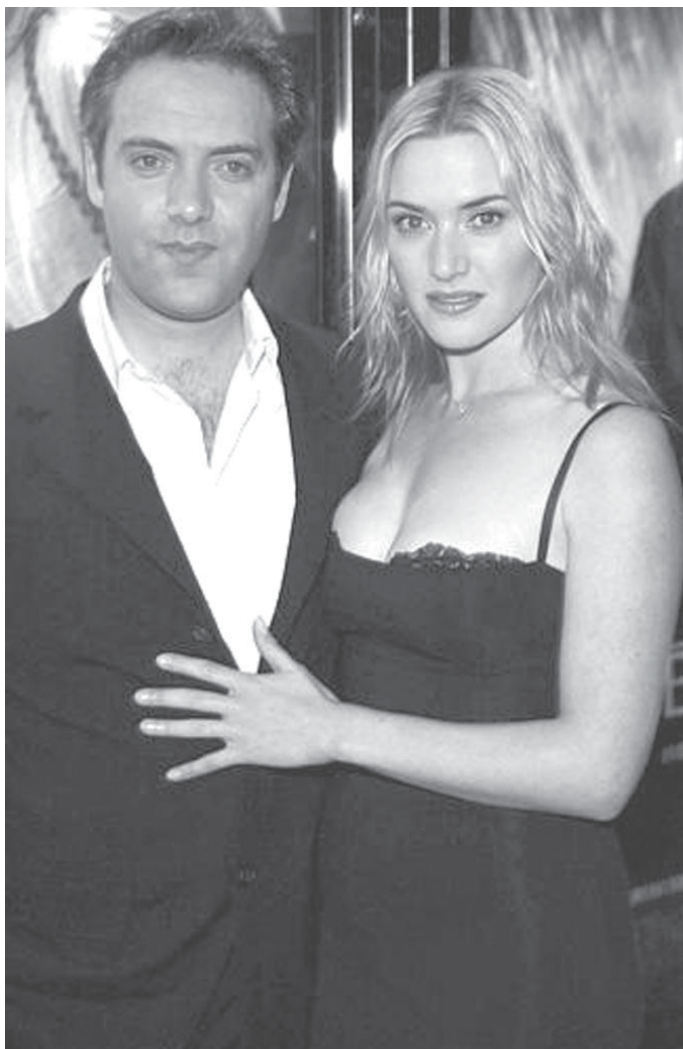
Joe Mendes was born on Dec. 22 in New York. He weighed 7 pounds, 13 ounces, Winslet publicist Jennifer Allen said Friday. No other details were released.

It is the first child for the couple, who were married in May.

"The couple is overjoyed," Allen said.

Winslet has a 3-year-old daughter, Mia, from her previous marriage to Jim Threapleton.

Winslet, 28, was nominated for Academy Awards for her roles in "Titanic," "Sense and Sensibility" and "Iris." Mendes, 38, won the best-director Oscar for 1999's "American Beauty." (AP)



Director Sam Mendes and girlfriend Kate Winslet arrive at the Empire Leicester Square, London, in this Sept. 18, 2002 file photo.

Clay Aiken meets with disabled teen fan

"American Idol" runner-up Clay Aiken has granted a fan her Christmas wish.

Jennifer Wilson, a 15-year-old girl with cerebral palsy, was at one of his concerts earlier this month holding a sign for Aiken decorated with holiday lights.

Getting any closer to him was beyond her wildest dreams.

But when her father, Wayne Wilson, lifted her out of her wheelchair for a bathroom break, the two ran into band members of the Black Eyed Peas, who also were performing that night.

They got Wilson backstage.

Aiken, who vaulted from obscurity to pop music

stardom, posed for pictures with Jennifer and gave her an autograph.

"Even though Jennifer can be difficult to understand when she speaks, Clay listened intently and understood everything she told him," Wayne Wilson said. "He must have spent 10 or 15 minutes with her."

Wilson said his daughter was overjoyed by the experience.

"I keep asking her what else she wants for Christmas, but she told me she already got everything. This was her one wish in life. I hope Clay knows how much he helped her," he said. (AP)



Aiken

Kingsley masters Farsi language

British actor Ben Kingsley stunned his colleagues on the set of "House of Sand and Fog" with how quickly he mastered basic Farsi.

Kingsley, who plays a former Iranian Air Force colonel living in the United States, learned Farsi on the set with help from a Farsi dialect coach as the cameras were rolling.

"I love doing anything in a different language. I find it very empowering," Kingsley told the San Francisco Chronicle. "I probably learned 50 to 100 percent

more (Farsi) than was necessary. There was editing and shrinking down of the Farsi scenes."

Iranian actress Shohreh Aghdashloo, who plays Kingsley's wife in the film, says she was surprised by his ability to learn the language. "He's really good at it," says Aghdashloo, who was born and raised in Iran but now lives in Los Angeles. "He's a great actor."

Kingsley won an Oscar for his portrayal of Mahatma Gandhi in the 1982 film "Gandhi." (AP)



California tops Virginia Tech, 52-49

By **BOB BAUM**
AP SPORTS WRITER

PHOENIX (AP)—Tyler Fredrickson, who had missed his previous

five field goal attempts, capped a wild Insight Bowl with a 35-yard field goal as time expired Friday night to give California a 52-49 victory over Virginia Tech.

Cal's Aaron Rodgers and Virginia Tech's Bryan Randall each flirted with 400 yards passing in an aerial duel that saw both teams rally from 14-point deficits.

Rodgers, a sophomore who didn't start until the fifth game, was 27-of-35 for 394 yards and two touchdowns. He also ran for two scores and was named the game's offensive MVP.

Randall was 24-for-34 for 398 yards and tied an Insight Bowl record with four TD passes. He also ran for a score.

The teams combined for 1,081 yards and broke the 15-year-old bowl's record for points.

Virginia Tech's Carter Warley - 12-for-15 going into the contest, missed field goals of 40, 45 and 29 yards.

Junior Kevin Jones, in his final game for the Hokies because he's leaving for the NFL, rushed for 153 yards on 16 carries, including an 11-yard touchdown.

Chris Lyman, starting in place of injured Cal star Geoff McArthur, caught five passes for 149 yards, including a 33-yarder for a touchdown. He had just 107 yards receiving for the entire season entering the game.

The Golden Bears (8-6), in their first bowl game since 1996, scored six consecutive touchdowns after falling behind 21-7 in the first quarter.

Rodgers, 15-for-17 for 245 yards in the second half, scored on an 8-yard option play to put Cal up 42-28 with 48 seconds left in the third quarter.

Virginia Tech (8-5) came back, though, and DeAngelo Hall reversed his field for a spectacular 52-yard punt return that tied the game at 49-49 with 3:11 remaining. After the game, Hall, a junior, said he will enter the NFL draft.

There were no turnovers in the game, but Rodgers almost committed a disastrous one when he was sacked at the Bears' 29 by Kevin Lewis and fumbled. But Cal's Chris Murphy recovered and the Golden Bears moved downfield for the winning field goal.

Hokies backup quarterback Marcus Vick, younger brother of Michael, hadn't caught a pass all season. But he caught four against Cal, including a 36-yard touchdown pass in the first half.



Virginia Tech quarterback Bryan Randall, foreground, is sacked by California's Ryan Riddle during the second half of the Insight Bowl, Friday, Dec. 26, 2003, in Phoenix. AP

Virginia Tech, moving from the Big East to the Atlantic Coast Conference next season, lost five of its last seven games after being ranked as high as No. 3.

The Hokies' Ernest Wilford

caught eight passes for 110 yards to break the school record for career receptions with 128. The old mark was 121 by Antonio Freeman (1991-94).

Rodgers, despite his late

start, surpassed Kyle Boller for second in season passing yardage with 2,903. Rodgers' fifth 300-yard passing game this season also tied a school record.

California, which won five

of its last six, trailed 28-21 at halftime but outscored the Hokies 21-0 in the third quarter.

Rodgers completed his first 12 passes in the second half for 194 yards.

The Bears took the lead 35-28 with a three-play, 66-yard drive that lasted just 52 seconds. Rodgers threw 42 yards to Lyman and 24 yards to Burl Toler to set up Adimchinobe Echemandu's 9-yard touchdown run with 5:59 left in the third quarter.

The teams combined for 537 yards - 330 by the Hokies - and 49 points in the first half.

California took the opening kickoff and went 79 yards in nine plays, with Rodgers sneaking over from the 1.

The Hokies, though, burned the Bears for touchdowns on their next three possessions. Randall ran 2 yards for the first score, and threw 3 yards to a wide-open Keith Willis - his first TD catch of the season - to put Virginia Tech ahead 14-7.

After a personal foul penalty on a Cal punt gave the Hokies the ball on the Bears' 36, Randall threw to Vick for the score and it was 21-7 with 50 seconds still to play in the opening quarter.

The crowd of 42,364 - 551 shy of capacity - was the largest for the game since it moved to Bank One Ballpark in 2000.

9 tournaments in two weeks in Australian Open warmups

BRISBANE, Australia (AP)—It begins with Lleyton Hewitt facing his new fiancée, Belgium's Kim Clijsters, in a mixed doubles tournament at the Hopman Cup and continues for two weeks across six time zones.

There are nine tennis tournaments scheduled in Australia and New Zealand early in the new year as players attempt to shake off the holiday break and prepare for the Australian Open, the first Grand Slam of 2004 that starts in Melbourne on Jan. 19.

Hewitt, who asked Clijsters, his girlfriend of four years, to marry him during a harbor cruise in Sydney before Christmas, will partner Australia's Alicia Molik in the Jan. 3-10 tournament at Perth that also features the defending champion Americans with James Blake and Lindsay Davenport.

Davenport replaces Serena Williams, who has delayed her scheduled return to competitive tennis to concentrate on preparations for the Australian Open.

Williams has not played a tournament since winning Wimbledon in July. She had knee surgery on Aug. 1.

At Perth, Belgium will feature Clijsters and Xavier Malisse while other countries

include Marat Safin and Anastasia Myskina for Russia and Daniela Hantuchova and Karol Kucera for Slovakia.

The Hopman Cup format includes women's and men's singles and mixed doubles in each match.

There are three tournaments scheduled for the week of Jan. 5-11, including women's events on the Gold Coast in Australia and at Auckland, New Zealand.

The men's tournament that week is at the AAPT Championships at Adelaide's Memorial Drive. The following week, men's tournaments are scheduled for Sydney and Auckland while the WTA tour has events at Sydney—the Adidas International along with the men—at Hobart, Tasmania and in Australia's national capital, Canberra.

The final warmup tournament is an exhibition men's event at Kooyong in Melbourne, the former site of the Australian Open.

Former Australian Open champion Thomas Johansson will play in his first tournament in more than a year at the Adelaide hardcourt event. Johansson, who won the 2002 Australian Open singles title, has not played a match since November of last year because

of shoulder and knee injuries.

Argentina's David Nalbandian, South Africa's Wayne Ferreira and Britain's Greg Rusedski feature in the singles field for the event.

Former U.S. Open singles champion Pat Rafter will make a comeback with fellow Australian Josh Eagle in the Adelaide doubles draw. Rafter, who hasn't played competitive tennis for two years, has also received a wild card into the Australian Open doubles.

Rafter, 31, hasn't played since Australia's Davis Cup final loss to France in December of 2001 and formally announced his retirement in January of this year.

Jelena Dokic, the former No. 1 Australian player, will end her self-imposed exile from the country and will compete at the Australian Open. Dokic, then 17, fled after her loss at the 2001 Open when her father accused officials of fixing the draw.

At the Australian Open at Melbourne Park, Andre Agassi will try to win a fifth Australian Open title. He will face three first-time Grand Slam winners from 2003 — No. 1-ranked Andy Roddick (U.S. Open), No. 2 Roger Federer (Wimbledon) and No. 3 Juan Carlos Ferrero (French Open).

Arrington agrees to 8-year, \$80M deal



WASHINGTON (AP)—Pro Bowl linebacker LaVar Arrington has agreed to an eight-year, \$80 million contract extension with the Washington Redskins, his agent said Friday.

Carl Poston said the deal includes \$26.5 million in bonuses, most of which become available immediately. Under Arrington's current contract, he would have earned just under \$10 million in salary and bonuses for the next three seasons.

The Redskins were eager to sign Arrington to a long-term contract that would accommodate the team's salary cap constraints. The deal replaces the last years of Arrington's current contract and defers some of those costs to later years.

"We're happy he'll be wearing burgundy and gold for a very long time," Redskins owner Daniel Snyder said.

Arrington declined a \$50 million, seven-year contract extension from the Redskins earlier this month.

Arrington was selected to his third consecutive Pro Bowl last week. He has career highs this season with 112 tackles, seven forced fumbles and 13 quarterback pressures. He



Washington Redskins first-round draft pick LaVar Arrington smiles during a press conference to announce he agreed to a seven-year contract with the Redskins, Saturday, July 22, 2000, at Redskins Park in Ashburn, Va. AP

also has six sacks.

"This is really a compliment to Dan Snyder on his commitment to winning," Poston said.

The Redskins signed Arring-

ton as the second overall choice in the 2000 NFL draft. The former Penn State star led the team in tackles in 2001 and led the NFL with 11 sacks in 2002.

Chicago Bulls beat Cleveland, 87-80



CLEVELAND (AP) — Jamal Crawford matched a season-high with 30 points and Corie Blount made a huge block in the final minute, leading the Chicago Bulls to an 87-80 win Saturday night over the Cleveland Cavaliers.

Crawford's final basket was a dunk with 21 seconds left after Blount swatted away Kevin Ollie's layup and made a quick outlet pass.

Crawford shot 12-of-20 and added five assists as the Bulls stopped a four-game losing streak and won for just the fourth time in 19 games.

LeBron James scored 18 points (7-of-24 shooting) and missed a 3-pointer with 35 seconds left that would have put the Cavaliers ahead. Cleveland missed its final seven shots and scored just one point over the last 3:34.

Heat 92, Wizards 84

In Washington, Eddie Jones scored 22 points and Rasual Butler added 10 in the fourth quarter as Miami won its third straight.

Lamar Odom added 17 points and Dwyane Wade had 15 for the Heat, who have won four of six and seven of nine. Wade sprained his right wrist when he was pushed from behind in a scrum under the Heat basket with 1:20 remaining in regulation. X-rays were negative, and he was to be reevaluated Saturday.

Larry Hughes led the Wizards with 21 points. Washington, which fell to 0-8 against Atlantic Division teams, has dropped three straight and 11 of 14. Jarvis Hayes added 14 points.

Hornets 109, Hawks 79

In New Orleans, David Wesley scored a season-high 32 points, including five 3-pointers, and the Hornets handed the Hawks their ninth straight road loss.

It was the most dominant performance in weeks for New Orleans, which came in having

lost four of five games—in cluding a blown 16-point, second-half lead in Cleveland on Tuesday.

Wesley, who had some poor shooting nights during the slump, was 13-of-18 from the field. Baron Davis scored 21 points for New Orleans, while P.J. Brown shot 7-of-9 for 16 points to go with nine rebounds. Jamaal Magloire grabbed 11 rebounds.

None of Atlanta starters reached double figures.

Nets 82, Pistons 79

In Auburn Hills, Michigan, Jason Kidd had 24 points, 12 assists and 11 rebounds for his league-leading fifth triple-double.

Kidd made all six of his free throws in the final 1:13, and Chauncey Billups missed two 3-pointers in the final seconds.

Kidd shot 7-of-18, including 4-of-5 on 3-pointers, and Richard Jefferson scored 27 for the Atlantic Division-leading Nets, who have won eight of 10.

The reeling Pistons have lost seven of nine.

Knicks 98, Grizzlies 94

In Memphis, Tennessee, Keith Van Horn scored 28 points and grabbed 13 rebounds and Allan Houston added 23 points.

The win snapped a seven-game road losing streak for the Knicks, while Memphis dropped its fourth straight and had its six-game home winning streak stopped.

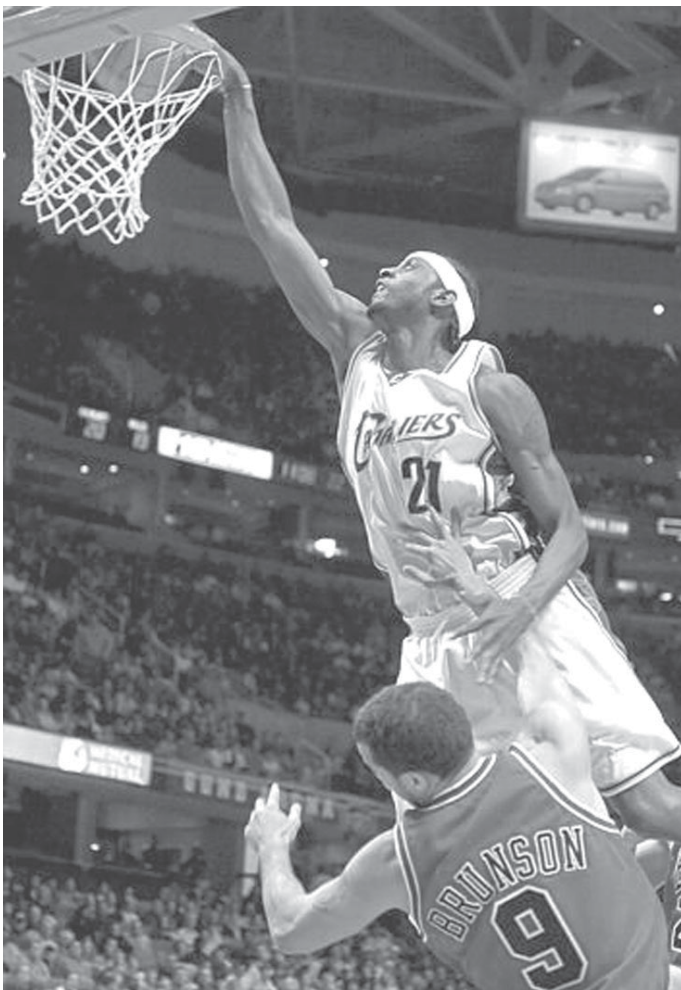
Van Horn connected on 10 of 17 shots, and Houston was 9-of-14 from the field as the Knicks shot 52 percent. Kurt Thomas and Frank Williams each had 18 for New York, Williams adding six assists in a reserve role.

Six Grizzlies finished in double figures, led by Pau Gasol with 20 points.

Spurs 98, Magic 83

In San Antonio, the Spurs used a late 15-0 run to break open a tight game and win their 12th straight.

Tim Duncan led San Antonio with 27 points and 16 rebounds,



Cleveland Cavaliers' Darius Miles (21) dunks over Chicago Bulls' Rick Brunson (9) during the second quarter Friday in Cleveland.

while Tony Parker added a season-high 22 points and Robert Horry had 14 — his high total with the Spurs.

The Spurs began its winning streak Dec. 5 in Orlando after losing four straight and dropping into last place in the Midwest Division. San Antonio now sits atop the division.

Orlando didn't break the run until Zaza Pachulia put in a layup with 3.9 seconds remaining. The Magic missed seven straight shots and had three turnovers during the drought.

Bucks 101, Pacers 96

In Milwaukee, Damon Jones scored all 14 of his points in the fourth quarter to help the Milwaukee Bucks climb above .500 for the first time in more

than six weeks.

Michael Redd scored 26 points, including a key 3-pointer with just over a minute remaining, as the Bucks came back after trailing by as many as 15. Milwaukee outscored Indiana 34-19 in the fourth quarter.

Celtics 104, Suns 102

In Phoenix, Ricky Davis hit a 20-foot (6-meter) jumper with 2.8 seconds left and Paul Pierce scored 19 of his 27 points in the second half as the Celtics overcame a 17-point third-quarter deficit.

The game was somewhat reminiscent of the teams' meeting three weeks ago when the Suns produced the biggest comeback their history, rallying from 29 points down to win. This

time, it was the Celtics who came from behind.

Walter McCarty added a season-high 20 points for the Celtics, and Mark Blount also had a season high with 16. Davis, obtained in a recent trade with Cleveland, had his Celtics' high with 14.

Shawn Marion topped the Suns with 25 points.

Nuggets 95, Rockets 94

In Denver, rookie Carmelo Anthony scored a career-high 37 points and Voshon Lenard hit three free throws after being fouled behind the arc with 8.3 seconds left.

Anthony was 13-for-22 from the field and scored 22 of his points in the third quarter for the Nuggets, who had lost five straight to Houston. Andre Miller added 22 points and seven assists.

Reserve Maurice Taylor had 22 points for Houston but missed a shot at the buzzer. Cuttino Mobley had 17 points and Jim Jackson 16.

Jazz 97, Raptors 94, OT

In Salt Lake City, Andrei Kirilenko scored 17 points and made several big plays in overtime—mostly with his defense against Vince Carter—as Utah survived a fourth-quarter collapse.

Toronto scored five points in the final 5 seconds of regulation to force overtime.

The game was tied at 92 in overtime when Kirilenko drove and banked in a left-handed hook shot as he was knocked to the floor. He made the free throw for a three-point play. Kirilenko harassed Carter into three missed shots in the extra period, including a sensational block.

Carter scored 30 points and Rose had 18 for the Raptors, who have lost six of seven and are winless on the road against Western Conference opponents.

Warriors 98, Kings 91

OAKLAND, California, Jason Richardson scored 25 points, and Nick Van Exel hit a running shot in the lane with 18.8 seconds left to help Golden State snap a 15-game losing streak against Sacramento.

Van Exel scored five points in the final moments as the Warriors barely held on for an impressive sweep of the NBA's top two teams. Golden State beat the Lakers 107-98 on Tuesday night before harassing the Kings into a rare night of poor shooting — and then holding on against Sacramento's last-ditch rally.

The Kings trailed 93-79 with 4:01 left before going on a 12-0 run keyed by seven points from Mike Bibby, who finished with 28. But Bibby—an 83 percent foul shooter—missed two free throws with 51 seconds left, and Peja Stojakovic missed an open jumper.

Clippers 101, 76ers 98

In Los Angeles, Quentin

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
New Jersey	15	13	.536	—
Boston	15	15	.500	1
Philadelphia	14	15	.483	1 1/2
Miami	12	17	.414	3 1/2
New York	11	19	.367	5
Washington	8	19	.296	6 1/2
Orlando	8	23	.258	8 1/2

Central Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Indiana	21	9	.700	—
New Orleans	19	11	.633	2
Detroit	16	13	.552	4 1/2
Milwaukee	15	14	.517	5 1/2
Toronto	14	14	.500	6
Cleveland	9	21	.300	12
Chicago	8	20	.286	12
Atlanta	8	23	.258	13 1/2

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Midwest Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
San Antonio	21	10	.677	—
Minnesota	18	10	.643	1 1/2
Denver	18	11	.621	2
Dallas	16	12	.571	3 1/2
Houston	16	13	.552	4
Utah	16	13	.552	4
Memphis	15	14	.517	5

Pacific Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
L.A. Lakers	20	7	.741	—
Sacramento	20	8	.714	1-2
Golden State	14	13	.519	6
Portland	14	13	.519	6
Seattle	13	13	.500	6 1/2
L.A. Clippers	12	13	.480	7
Phoenix	10	20	.333	11 1/2

By Associated Press

Richardson scored 22 points and Elton Brand had 20 points and nine rebounds as all five starters scored in double figures for Los Angeles.

The Clippers shot 48.7 percent, improving to 8-1 when they shoot 45 percent or better from the field. Corey Maggette had 18 points for Los Angeles, which won its fifth straight at home.

The 76ers, missing three-time NBA scoring champ Allen Iverson for the sixth straight game because of a bruised right knee, lost for the fifth time in seven games despite having six players in double figures.

Eric Snow recorded his third straight double-digit assist game with 13, but shot only 5-for-14 and missed a game-tying 3-point attempt at the buzzer.

Trail Blazers 101, Timberwolves 92

In Portland, Oregon, Jeff McInnis had 21 points and eight assists, and Portland snapped Minnesota's six-game winning streak.

Wesley Person had 16 of his 20 points in the second quarter when Portland outscored Minnesota 37-17 to take control.

Kevin Garnett had 27 points, 10 rebounds and nine assists for the Timberwolves. Sam Cassell added 23 points and Latrell Sprewell had 21.

Cassell scored on a runner to pull the Timberwolves to 97-92 with 38.7 seconds remaining, but Person answered with a turnaround jumper from the top of the key with 17.5 seconds left.

Expos sign third baseman Tony Batista



MONTREAL (AP)—The

Montreal Expos added some much needed power to their lineup Friday, agreeing to a \$1.5 million, one-year contract with third baseman Tony Batista.

Batista, a two-time All-Star, hit .235 with a team-leading 26 home runs and 99 runs-batted in last year with the Baltimore Orioles. He averaged 31 home runs a season over the last five years, including a career-high 41 for the Toronto Blue Jays in 2000.

Batista has 182 home runs and 571 RBIs in eight seasons with Oakland, Arizona, Toronto and Baltimore.

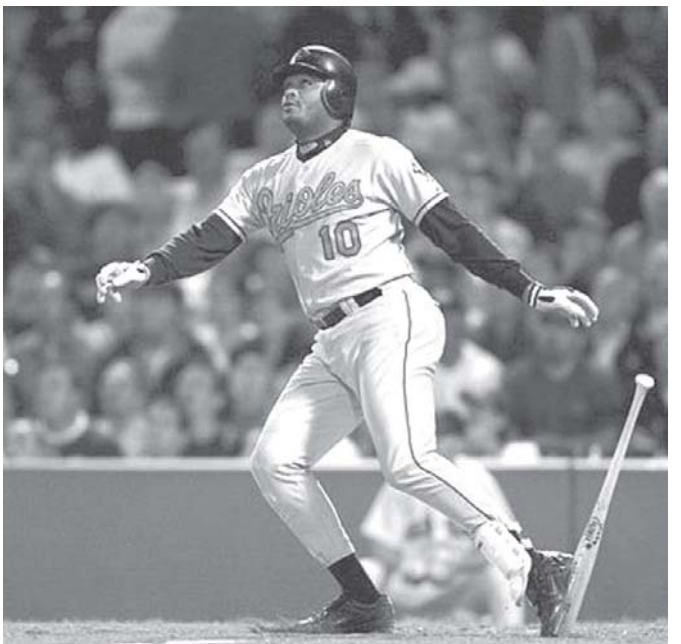
He joins newly signed outfielder Carl Everett in the

revamped Expos lineup with the expected loss of All-Star Vladimir Guerrero to free agency. Everett signed a two-year contract with Montreal on Dec. 16.

The Expos also announced the signing of right-hander Jeremy Fikac to a minor-league contract. The reliever was 0-1 with a 4.50 ERA in 14 games for Oakland last season.

Batista was the 105th player to agree to a contract among the 210 who filed for free agency after the World Series.

Baltimore Orioles' Tony Batista watches his grand slam against the Boston Red Sox during the first inning at Fenway Park in Boston Wednesday, Sept. 24, 2003.



The Week in Sports



New officers of the Saipan Tennis Association are sworn in during their Christmas Party/Taga Tennis Tournament awards banquet last Saturday at the Tambayan Restaurant. From left: Board members Felipe Quiroz, Delia Johnson, Robert Coracero and vice-president Dr. Bert Ventura.



Agnes Salazar, left, and Arlene Osma pose for the camera after receiving their women's 3.0 runner-up trophies during the Taga Tennis Tournament awards banquet. Behind are Ventura, Pangelinan and STA vice president-internal Nelia Luna.



Department of Public Health medical director Richard "Doc" Brostrom, seen here receiving his trophy, picked up the moniker Palau Assassin after beating a string of players from Belau en route to winning the men's singles 3.0 division of the 1st Annual Taga Tennis Tournament. Presenting the trophy is STA president Roy Pangelinan while looking on is newly-installed vice president-external Dr. Bert Ventura.

No holiday for sports

PHOTOS AND TEXT BY MARK RABAGO AND SHAN SEMAN, REPORTERS

The past week was a busy one for sports even as the festive atmosphere of the season permeated through the sporting venues around the island.

In basketball, Visminda-Country House became the first team to win a championship other than SIP-Verizon after it defeated a fighting Cabalen-RP Construction squad, 118-115, in overtime last Sunday in the finals of the 2003 UFO Miller Lite Cup.

Chosen as the championship game's MVP player was talented swingman Banjo Basila after he scored 8 of his

game-high 39 points in the extra period.

Also raking in awards were teammates Fernando "Pando" Muleta and Jawn Joyner. Muleta took home regular season MVP honors and the best in steals award.

Joyner, for his part, got the best in block shots trophy and was named, along with Muleta, to the league's Mythical 5 selection. Others voted on to the elite list were Cabalen's Ronald Delos Reyes and Randy Arnedo and Mobil-LIPS' Andres "Jhun" Estolas.

In tennis, the Filipino-American Tennis Association and the Saipan

Tennis Association held their respective Christmas parties in following nights.

On Friday, FILATA had its Christmas Party at Jade Restaurant and the succeeding yearend elections had Micronesian Games medalist Eli Buenaventura being voted as president.

The next evening, STA held its awards banquet/Christmas Party at Tambayan Restaurant. Ligaya Paculanang and Felipe Quiroz led all awardees, taking home six championship or runner-up trophies between them. Also bagging in a lot of awards were Eli Buenaventura, Kazumi Imai, Letty Jones, and Arlene Osma.



Members of the Filipino-American Tennis Association whoop it up during their Christmas Party last Friday night at Jade Restaurant along Beach Road.



Cabalen-RP Construction-Transamerica players pose with their 1st runner-up trophy after finishing second in the 2003 UFO Miller Lite Cup last Sunday.



MIFICPA-Power players receive their 2nd runner-up trophy from Philippine Consul General Wilfredo L. Maximo during the 2003 UFO Miller Lite Cup awards presentation last Sunday.



Newly sworn FILATA president Eli Buenaventura, left, presents a plaque of appreciation to outgoing president Boyet Minor during the tennis association's Christmas Party.



SIP-Verizon players receive their 2nd runner-up trophy from Philippine Consul General Wilfredo L. Maximo during the 2003 UFO Miller Lite Cup awards presentation last Sunday.



No holiday for sports

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27

Saipan Tribune Sports

California tops Virginia Tech, 52-49

Tyler Fredrickson, who had missed his previous five field goal attempts, capped a wild Insight Bowl with a 35-yard field goal as time expired Friday night to give California a 52-49 victory over Virginia Tech

25



28 SUNDAY, DECEMBER 28, 2003

SAIPAN TRIBUNE



MARK RABAGO

Visminda-Country House players and their supporters are all smiles after copping the championship of the 2003 UFO Miller Lite Cup last Sunday against Cabalen-RP Construction. Joining them in the photo is Philippine Consul General Wilfredo L. Maximo. Below right: Center Ed Cosino celebrates with teammate Banjo Calpito. Below left: Championship game MVP Basila drives against Cabalen's Ryan Mendoza.

Visminda finally answers the call

By MARK RABAGO
REPORTER



It was nothing short of a storybook ending for Visminda-Country House in the 2003 UFO Miller Lite Cup.

Visminda capped off an astounding season with a championship when they stopped a gallant Cabalen-RP Construction crew dead on their tracks, 118-115, in overtime last Sunday at a packed Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Although the Nel Atalig-supported team had two games to take home the title, Visminda coach Boy Garcia was relieved his boys settled the issue then and there.

"Don't get me wrong, I was happy with the twice-to-beat advantage, but coming in as the favored team does have its disadvantages. The game last Sunday was proof of that. Cabalen was fighting for dear life and they forced overtime. Luckily for us, our players made all the key plays in the extra period," he said.

Going into the finals, Garcia's Visminda team already was at a disadvantage. Absences and injuries had decimated his 12-man lineup to just nine healthy players, which including himself.

Last year's MVP Danny Bicara, who played sparingly in the regular season and



playoffs on account of a gimpy knee, went home to the Philippines. His frontcourt partner, Emil de Belen, also was indisposed after sustaining a sprained ankle in a practice game the night before.

Curiously, however, instead of implementing a slowdown game to conserve the energy of his players, Garcia ordered his team to explode from the gates and dictate the tempo from the get-go.

That resulted in Visminda controlling the first quarter, 28-15. But



Cabalen would regain their balance in the second and cut their deficit to 39-42 at halftime. And then came their big push in the third, which gave Cabalen the driver's seat at 69-66 with a quarter to go in the ballgame.

Garcia blamed foul trouble on veteran Dado Vistal as the cause for Visminda's retreat in the second and third quarters. With the former semi-pro riding the bench, Cabalen made a killing on their patented drive-and-

draw play with youngster Ryan Mendoza making the most damage.

But come the fourth, Garcia reinserted Vistal back in the lineup and instructed his team to change their defensive assignments. In place of a zone where Vistal guarded the left side of the post, Garcia swung Vistal to the center and let 6'3" behemoth Ed Cosino man the critical spot with defensive whiz Jawn Joyner on the opposite flank.

The adjustment worked wonders and

Visminda finally wrestled back the lead until four free throws off rainbow attempts by Ronald Delos Reyes and Paul Magcalas gave Cabalen back the lead.

Fortunately again for Garcia, Vistal managed to fish a foul off Delos Reyes in a desperate play and made one out of two free throws to force overtime.

In the extra period, Garcia knew the win was already in the bag when Visminda made their first three attempts. Garcia also helped his team's cause on the floor, sinking a pressure-packed side jumper that was sandwiched by two triples from regular season MVP Fernando "Pando" Muleta and Vistal.

And then there was the expert marksmanship of championship MVP Banjo Basila from the 15-foot line. Going six-for-six in overtime, Basila also delivered the coup de grace when he scooted down for a layup and then dished to an open Bernard Montano in the dying second of the ballgame.

"I would like to thank my players, our supporters, the management of Country House and our manager Nel Atalig for making all these possible," said an ecstatic Garcia after the game.

The rest of the Visminda team is made up of assistant coach Arnel Caro, sharpshooter Rey Uy, reliable role player Arman Anasan, third-string playmaker Arnold Vega, and Jun Fidelecio.